

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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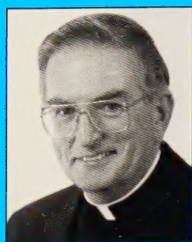
Memories of a Brother-In-Law



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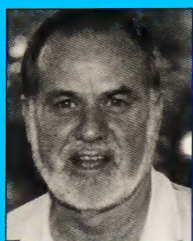
A Layman's Ministry



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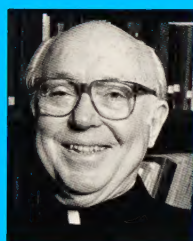
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The editors of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT are pleased to consider for publication articles relating to the ongoing work of those involved in helping other people through religious leadership and formation, spiritual direction, education, and counseling.

Manuscripts should be submitted to the Executive Editor, Linda Amadeo, either (1) as e-mail attachments in any Windows-based (not Macintosh) word-processing program from 2000 or earlier or (2) by mail (see addresses below). Unaccepted mailed manuscripts will not be returned unless submitted with a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 4,500 words (15 double-spaced pages), with no more than 6 recommended readings; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide author name(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

Book reviews (maximum length: 600 words) should be sent to the Book Review Editor, Sister Brenda Hermann, M.S.B.T., A.C.S.W., at bhermann5@comcast.net. Books for review should be sent to Sr. Hermann at 11529 February Circle, #303, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

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EDITOR'S PAGE

STRETCH YOUR IMAGINATION; LISTEN TO DIFFERENT VOICES, PART II

In the Editor's Page of the Fall 2003 issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, I wrote about the need for members of the church, especially for the church's ordained and non-ordained ministers, to hear different voices in order to stretch our imaginations, and this for the sake of a pastorally more sensitive and theologically more enlightened ministry. There I mentioned the experiences of women and of those who had been psychically scarred by abuse. I promised to mention other voices in a future issue and want to honor that promise here.

How often are the voices of lesbians and gays heard speaking of their experience of coming to spiritual and emotional maturity as members of the church and a culture? Oh, we hear their voices asking for the elimination of bias and for equal rights, but we rarely hear what it is like to be homosexual in orientation and to grow up in our culture and our church. Can young persons speak honestly about the growing realization of their homosexual orientation and their feelings about this when, it seems, everyone is expected to be heterosexual in orientation, and when they hear slurs and jokes about their orientation? What is it like to be attracted to one's own gender and to be a member of the Roman Catholic Church? How many church ministers have heard of such experiences? How many priests and bishops have heard the stories of how men and women whose orientation is homosexual have come to the heartfelt conviction that God loves them as they are? Of how difficult it was to come to this conviction? Of how necessary it was to be able to be honest about their struggles with at least one mentor? Of how difficult it was to be honest when the first reactions to such honesty often seemed to be judgmental?

I became aware of the burden many homosexual-oriented Jesuits secretly carry when, as provincial, I told the province members, "We are very diverse,

liberals and conservatives, Republicans and Democrats, old and young, homosexual and heterosexual in our orientation, and yet we need one another, and we need to learn how to communicate with one another as brothers in the Lord." I was stunned afterwards when a number of men came up to thank me for mentioning sexual orientation. One of them said, "It's the first time anyone in authority publicly acknowledged the existence of someone like me in the order." This helped me to imagine what it must be like to be homosexual in orientation in a group in which it is not possible to mention aloud one's orientation. A Jesuit could, for example, say that he felt a strong attraction to a woman, but this brother of mine could not say that he felt the same toward a man.

In spiritual direction, in intimate talks with trusted superiors and sometimes in small faith-sharing groups, homosexually oriented Jesuits spoke of their orientation and of the struggles and joys of growing into spiritual and emotional maturity, but more public discussions were taboo. Moreover, until recent times the prevailing assumption was that everyone in the Society of Jesus was heterosexual in orientation. *In Proverbs of Ashes*, Rita Nakashima Brock writes: "I fell easily into assumptions that someone was heterosexual unless they made a point of coming out to me. I was oblivious to heterosexual privilege, the ease of fitting in, of having my relationships be open and public, of having my sexual identity an unquestioned norm that required no examination." Her words express my feelings when I heard my brother thank me for giving public recognition that he could exist in the Society of Jesus. In the church we need to hear the stories of gays and lesbians who are trying to live as Christians in a world in which their orientation can cause them great difficulties as well as bring them joy and lead them to holiness.

I have had the privilege, as spiritual director and superior, to listen to such experiences. I have admired the courage, the honesty and the spiritual depth of men and women who have become remarkably mature spiritual persons, outstanding ministers in

the church and contributors to society. The process to such maturity is often rocky and tumultuous, like many growth processes. Truth to tell, not everyone makes it to such maturity, whether they are heterosexual or homosexual in orientation. Talking about the process, it seems, has been a great help on the journey toward wholeness. Listening to these experiences has also been a lesson about God's mysterious ways of drawing us human beings to holiness and to friendship with God. Church leaders need to hear such experiences in order to speak and write with compassion and understanding about sexual orientation and to develop nuanced positions on disputed public issues. We will only hear them, however, when we are trusted as compassionate listeners.

The present climate in the church does not seem conducive to openness about one's experience with regard to sexual orientation, or, indeed, with regard to sexuality in general, as these relate to growth in friendship with the Lord. In fact, the climate for such openness has, in my lifetime, never been that healthy, but the period after Vatican II gave promise of a better atmosphere. Men and women began to speak more openly with spiritual directors about their experiences of growing into mature sexual beings as Christians. In some religious congregations and seminaries, men and women were able to talk more honestly with their immediate superiors about their experiences of becoming maturely celibate as heterosexually or homosexually oriented persons. The window that let in this fresh air seems to be closing fast. If, as is persistently predicted, a document from Rome is issued prohibiting the ordination to the priesthood of men with a homosexual orientation, the window will be tightly closed, and we will, I fear, return to an unwritten rule of silence with regard to sexuality and sexual orientation.

Such an unwritten policy of silence ruled in religious congregations and seminaries of the 1950s and 1960s that produced most of those religious and priests whose sexual and emotional immaturity led to problems in the church. If one could not, or felt that one could not speak honestly to spiritual directors and superiors about sexuality, about the joys and struggles of being a sexual being called to live a life of

celibate chastity in the modern world, it is no wonder that some men and women never grew up emotionally and sexually. The thought that Roman authorities might publish a document prohibiting a man with a homosexual orientation from being ordained sends shivers through me. Such a prohibition would continue the silence about sexuality in those seminaries and religious congregations where it still prevails and would tend to force such silence back into those seminaries and congregations where, with much fear and trembling, it has become possible to talk openly, at least with spiritual directors and superiors, about the realities of one's sexuality and of one's struggles to develop a celibate chastity.

In a deeply moving memoir of his journey back to Catholicism (*Keeping Faith: A Skeptic's Journey*), Fenton Johnson notes that all human beings are called to narrow the vast gap between what we say and what we do. "(A) life of virtue consists of integrating the life that I profess and the life I actually live. Power resides in concealment; honesty represents a yielding of power, an effort to be transparent to oneself and to others....The greatest act of betrayal by institutionalized religions lies in making the discipline of honesty more difficult ('don't ask, don't tell' prevailed in the churches long before it was adopted by the military) rather than providing support for living it out." We need to foster a climate that helps all people to narrow the gap.

The ministry and teaching of the church can only be enhanced by listening to the real experiences of all God's people, but especially of those who are not heard because they are often on the margins of our concerns. Such listening will make all of us more aware of the real struggles of people. It will also enlighten us all on the mysterious ways of God.



William A. Barry, S.J., Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief

Reflections of a Brother-In-Law

Daniel E. Jennings, D.S.W.

Father James J. Gill, S.J., M.D., had been ordained just a few months (1957) before I met his sister, Mary, now my wife of forty-four years. Shortly after meeting Mary I met the rest of her family, including her newly ordained brother, Jim. From the beginning it seemed we had many common interests — the church, religious life, experience in military service and the theater. While it was not until the last ten years of his life that we had a lot of close association, there are several outstanding memories of events over nearly a half-century that I thought would be of interest to those who knew him in a variety of capacities.

In 1959, Jim presided at our marriage in St. Cecilia's Church, San Francisco, the church in which he had said his first Mass in 1957. He was especially attentive to our many Jewish friends as I was then employed as a social worker at the Jewish Family Service Agency in San Francisco. Most of them had never before been in a Catholic church, much less met a Catholic priest. Two years later we relocated to Washington, D.C., where I earned my doctorate in social work and taught at The Catholic University of America. At this time the fourth of our five children had been born, and Jim had come to baptize him on the very day of the university commencement at which I received my degree. Jim stayed with our chil-

dren so Mary could attend the ceremony at the university.

We were planning to move back to the West Coast, this time to Portland, Oregon, where I was to teach at Portland State University. Following Jim's experience with our four children, Jim said to us that he was spending most of his time at that point in his life treating mental illness as a psychiatric resident at the Institute of Living, and in order to do some preventive work he would like us to fly to Portland from Washington and he would drive our car across the country for us in the interest of our mental health. We gratefully accepted this act of love on his part.

In 1969, Jim's younger sister, Loretta, was terminally ill with cancer in San Francisco. Mary spent some time there with her before her death at age thirty-seven. By now we had five children and were preparing to celebrate our tenth wedding anniversary. Shortly after Loretta's death I was going to a professional meeting in New York City. Knowing my love for the theater, Jim wrote to me and enclosed tickets to two or three major Broadway productions, saying that "the doctor prescribed this activity in thanks for your help at the time of our sister's death." And a few months later there came the unexpected offer that if we wished to celebrate our anniversary with a trip to

I remember being on an airplane trip with Jim during which he talked with me about his vision of an educationally based study center

Hawaii, he would baby-sit all five of our children. That, too, was an offer we couldn't resist.

After that experience he jokingly commented that it had helped confirm his commitment to celibacy. Three years later, Jim did an encore for us when we took our first trip to Europe. In Paris there was a letter from him thanking us for having enough trust in him to allow him the privilege of taking care of our five children.

Our contact with him over the years is perhaps best described by our daughter, Mary Cumberland, who wrote to him three months before his death, knowing that he was terminally ill. She was writing about taking her thirteen-year-old nephew to a theater production, and she wrote: "It reminds me of all the wonderful shows you enabled me to see over the years with you and with Linda through your generosity. I hope you know how much it meant to me to be able to see and do all the things that you made possible. I remember what you said at Will's (her son, now nearly three years old) baptism about the importance of doing things like that for children — being the one who introduces them to the arts and fosters their appreciation of those things. You certainly did that for me. Thank you!....Thank you again for all your thoughtfulness, kindness and generosity. My college graduation, our wedding and Will's baptism were all extra special events because you helped us celebrate. You are a wonderful uncle."

In the early 1980s, a consultation service for priests and women religious was established in Houston by Rev. James Harnan, M.S.C. I worked as a clinical social worker in this consultation service on a part-time basis, and we obtained some consultation

visits from Jim Gill. He was helpful to the staff there. Later in the 1990s, when a residential center was opened in Splendora, a suburb of Houston, he assisted the staff in its work there, also.

It was in 1992 when attending a workshop that he and Linda Amadeo were giving at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans that we learned he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer. At that time Jim did not want anyone beyond his religious superior, very few close friends and the members of the family to know of his illness and the treatment he was receiving for it, fearing it would interfere with his being called upon to serve the wide range of persons and organizations with whom he was involved as a consultant.

Some years before the opening of The Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality in 1994, I remember being on an airplane trip with Jim during which he talked with me about his vision of an educationally based study center with the purpose of educating more fully women and men religious and priests, especially those engaged in formation work in seminaries and religious congregations in the areas of human sexuality. It seemed like an idea whose time had come, and Jim saw it as an enterprise that would be of great value to the church, especially the church in the United States. It was an ongoing puzzle and disappointment to him that while "students" from all continents of the world came to the program, proportionately few came from the United States. My wife and I were associated with this effort of his from its beginning in Boston in 1994. After its first year there, during which time we served respectively as librarian and tutor, we retired to our home in Houston, Texas. However, we periodically returned to help at various times in the program over its years in Silver Spring, Maryland, and in Chicago.

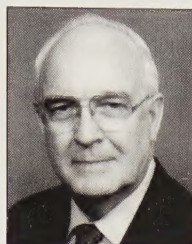
That was an extremely rewarding experience, and we are grateful to Jim for affording us this professional opportunity. We regret that it will no longer continue in this country, but from our associations with Father Angelo D'Agostino, S.J., M.D., who has generously agreed to have the whole library of books and audio and videotapes shipped to him in Nairobi as he develops a faculty to begin Jim's dream there, we are confident of its success in Nairobi, Kenya. As a member of the Editorial Board of this magazine, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, and as parents of a Regis University graduate, we are delighted that this important contribution to the church is continuing.

Mary joined Linda Amadeo in Scottsdale to be with Jim during the last ten days of his life. It seemed most fitting that his funeral was at Saint Ignatius

Church at the University of San Francisco, in the very church from which his father had been buried fifty-four years earlier (1949). The Gill Theater on that campus continues to honor the father's contributions as professor of drama and Director of the College Players.

Jim, ever a true Jesuit, was buried in the Jesuit section of the Santa Clara Mission Cemetery in Santa Clara, California. It was with sorrow, but a deep peace, that we left his remains there, knowing that he was truly home, enjoying the eternal reward for his

faithful love and service to God and humanity. May he rest in peace.



Dr. Daniel E. Jennings, D.S.W., Professor Emeritus, University of Houston, is a member of the Editorial Board of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

The Eighth Sacrament

I am convinced that caregiving is the eighth sacrament. Yes, a sacrament. Definitely a sacrament. An outward sign instituted by Christ. Christ, caregiver deluxe. An outward sign, instituted by Christ to give grace. Grace to do what I am not cut out to do.

It all began as a two-day trip to take my dad to his doctor for a routine checkup and to celebrate his birthday the second day. It ended in twelve days of caring for him after emergency surgery for a detached retina. We learned of the need for surgery on his birthday. His eighty-ninth birthday. He told me when he was diagnosed with bladder cancer eleven years earlier not to worry about him because he believed he would beat the cancer. He did. We had the birthday party for him the night before surgery, and he had a grand time.

Three days after surgery: shingles. I got him to the doctor immediately, and the pain was somewhat controlled by the medication.

An outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace. Grace to cleanse a broken eye. To keep his hands away from painful shingles. To do what I am told. And I was told what to do every nanosecond. Check the back door a million times a day to make certain it is locked. Close the drapes. Pick a paper off the kitchen floor. Get the salt and pepper on demand. Heat up his warm coffee. Turn out that light. To make certain he put on clean socks and underwear every day. To watch for signs of physical weakness. I was given the grace to sleep on the couch so I could answer his bell several times a night so he didn't fall on his way to the bathroom. To make certain he looked at the floor eight days straight to keep the gas bubble in his eye in place long enough for the retina to heal. To answer to my mother's name every time he called me.

I bought him a pound of shrimp — big shrimp, huge shrimp — the last night I was there because, as his granddaughter told him, he had been a brave little soldier. Well, I am finally home where people that I know call me by my own name.

Through all of his demands for total attention and servitude, he was grateful for my presence. His trust in my ability was total. Misplaced, perhaps, but total.

This was not my first experience in caregiving. What I learned early on is that the role is not to be a helper for someone who is ill. Not to look upon the patient as being in a lesser state. To understand that those I serve are those who serve me as well. Who teach me about the importance of presence. The importance of compassion. Who give me the opportunity to go beyond myself no matter how difficult the struggle. To live with my impatience and irritation and to know that I will have another opportunity very soon to be patient and kind. Who give me the strength not to blow every opportunity. Because they believe that I can do it. That I will do it. They believe that I care. And I do.

I am beyond exhaustion but grateful for the privilege. Could it be that this is what we were created to do? Could this be the washing of the feet that we were taught? Could this be the great opportunity to love one another? Could this be the opportunity to be the most human that we can be? To lay down our time, our energy, our care for one another? To do what we have no confidence in doing? For our dad? For our mom? Brother or sister? Friend? For all of those who have their names carved on the palm of God's hand?

If all of life is a circle, perhaps caregiving is one very important entry point. There will come a day when someone will need to make certain that I have clean underwear. That I smell good. That I don't fall. That I get my meds on time. Hopefully, that person will be kind and patient and will be grateful for the opportunity to be of service. And in that person's future, there will be another caregiver who will do the same. Who will understand the eighth sacrament and embrace the grace that goes with it.

— Sister Margaret Cessna, H.M.,
is a former high school teacher

JAMES J. GILL, S.J., M.D., 1925-2003

James Torrens, S.J.

Editor's Note: The following is the homily preached at the funeral liturgy for Jim Gill.

I am more grateful than I can say for the privilege of leading you all in prayer for Father Jim Gill. Today we are seeing him off on that mysterious journey we must all take one day, into "the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns" (*Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 1). How thankful we are for his extraordinary life and ministry. In commending him to God the merciful Savior, how full is our heart.

I had cause to admire and envy the Gill family quite a while ago, in high school, when Jim's brother Larry won the Hearst History Contest in which many of us competed. That he was not of our school kind of rubbed it in. Jim's father, "Mister Gill," was a major presence at Saint Ignatius as our drama director, with pronounced Shakespearean tastes. So Jim came by his lifelong love of drama and the stage honestly. If we had to recall a little Shakespeare appropriate for today, it would have to be Lady Macbeth late in the play, washing her hands over and over, obsessed by her guilt. A Gentlewoman says to the Doctor, "She has light by her continually, 'tis her command." He says, "You see, her eyes are open." The Gentlewoman

answers, "Aye, but their sense is shut." The whole scene culminates in the Doctor's famous words: "More needs she the divine than the physician." (Act V, Scene 1).

As Freud put it in a humble moment, the poets and writers of fiction long anticipated the psychologists. We do now have what Lady Macbeth did not, psychiatrists, those doctors of the soul. And in Jim Gill's case we have a physician who was also a divine. He truly had that vocation of healer of the soul. It was integral to his Jesuit priesthood. He lived out the prophetic kind of priesthood that was described recently by Father Michael Buckley, a priesthood "concerned to speak out the Word of God in any way, that it could be heard, assimilated and incarnated within the social life of human beings."

No one just steps into a role like "doctor of the soul." It has to come from a lifelong pursuit of wisdom, the pursuit that is so wonderfully and vividly sketched out in the Wisdom books of the Bible, where the woman figure of Wisdom keeps turning up as the tutor. Her pupil, Ben Sirach, says of her: "From earliest youth I was familiar with her . . . and until the end I will cultivate her." This pursuit was not at all alien to the young man, Jim Gill, who was drawn to God, drawn to Jesus Christ, by those words we repeated

over and over as altar boys in Latin, "*Introibo ad altare Dei*," "I will go to the altar of God, to God who gladdens my youth."

This pursuit of wisdom includes a lot of questioning. What is it to be a man, to be a woman, to be physical, to be spirit in this particular flesh, to be a child of God in healthy or hurtful conditions, in modern or postmodern times? The names Abraham Maslow, Gordon Allport and Erik Erikson all figured in Jim's pursuit of wisdom about our inner workings. He learned from them the art of listening, the ways to enable insight, a focus on strengthening the will. He absorbed that view of human development as a growth happening by stages, with tasks at every stage. His appreciation of the life cycle dictated the title of the magazine he launched a quarter century ago, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

Thomas Aquinas counted for him, too, I am convinced. We all learned from Thomas that the religious, the sacred, is not a special place apart, a Sunday space; it is the whole of our natural life permeated by God. A French Dominican, Marie-Dominique Chenu, tried summing this up. He wrote that for Thomas "matter and spirit by their mutual inherence are joint principles of one determined totality without any gap." More simply, in our make-up there is no lower region sealed off from spirit and no ethereal region out of bodily reach. It is an optimistic outlook basically, not at all post-modern. Sure, said Chenu, "we have difficult victories over passion, but our nature and our goodness are fulfilled only in an integrated humanity." That sentence could be written, I believe, over Jim's last great enterprise, The Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality.

There is something very much in this same vein, something with which Jim's own humanism chimes, in our reading from Saint Paul to his dear Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord always. . . . Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (Philippians 4: 4-8). Just look at the face in the obituary notice of Jim, and that's the kind of person you see. And there's a very good line in that obituary notice: "Jim saw his work in terms of 'conversion,' helping people to undergo a conversion to become like Jesus, or a conversion from adolescence into adulthood, or a conversion physically to better health." That covers a lot of bases. Father Chenu said something else very relevant to Jim: "The apostolic vocation arises directly out of a love troubled by others' needs, by a spiritual destitution to which it feels it must respond." In his

He wanted above all to present models of wellness, of a healthy interaction between psychology and spirituality

Spiritual Exercises, Saint Ignatius feeds that apostolic vision with a meditation called "The Kingdom of Christ." In this imaginative prayer we are urged to envision all the territory that Jesus covered in his ministry. We have many passages of the Gospel to help us with this. In the Gospel read for this funeral Mass, Saint Mark speaks of the whole town gathered at the door of where he was staying.

Mark says: "He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him." When Jesus and his followers tried escaping to a rural retreat, the people flocked after him. But he could not be held by just one set of needy people. "He told them, 'Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also'" (Mark 1: 32-39).

You can see where Jim got the spur for his worldwide consulting and his workshops — his round of visits to the Grande Chartreuse and to India, the Philippines, Australia, Nairobi, Ireland, you name it. He was a genuine teacher, clear and full of examples. He wanted above all to present models of wellness, of a healthy interaction between psychology and spirituality. But as a healer, a doctor of soul, he was focused on what can still be considered and called the driving out of demons, an easing of obsessions and terrible burdens. As the years went on, he concentrated more and more on people devoting themselves to God — priests, brothers, women religious — because their demons affect so many others. He was at the end of a hotline from religious superiors and bishops. I regard him as an admirable servant of the church in this regard. He had a lot of judgment calls to make, with confidence enough but no charism of infallibility, and

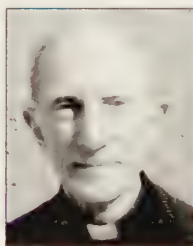
**Whatever we are
holding tight, we
eventually have to
unloosen the fingers
and open the palm, so
God can have it**

he offered his very best to God.

With his tremendous determination, Jim kept to his many commitments during a long struggle with the enemy, cancer. He was especially bent on the search for adequate housing for the sexuality institute. He finally decided, after consultation with his Provincial Superior and the Provincial Superior in Nairobi, Kenya, to gift the complete library and holdings of CISHS to a Jesuit group in Nairobi. The enemy became the friend that delivered him to God. I think of those old radio shows and films we used to hear and see, where a voice comes on suddenly,

"Okay, hand it over." Whatever we are holding tight, we eventually have to unloosen the fingers and open the palm, so God can have it. So God can have us. Jim has spent the past year doing just that — fighting on, but doing that.

This funeral liturgy takes place on the Catholic feast day of Mary's Assumption. In the Eastern Church it is called Mary's Dormition. We recall her going to sleep in God, and we celebrate her being welcomed wholly, body and soul, into the divine embrace, into God's element that we call heaven. It was for being so special among the redeemed that she received her resurrected body. Mary, Theotokos, the God-bearer, was also the most faithful disciple, and as such she preceded us, showing us in her assumption the heavenly body promised to all who follow Jesus Christ. She is the one we address humbly in the "Hail Mary": "pray for us now and at the hour of our death." All of us prayed a lot to her, and Jim prayed to her in his long illness. We are happy to invoke her as "Mother," intercessor, today, saying, "Goodbye, Jim, for now," handing him on to the Lord.



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The Gospel Way of Thérèse of Lisieux

Brother Joseph F. Schmidt, F.S.C.

On October 19, 1997, Pope John Paul II proclaimed St. Thérèse of Lisieux a Doctor of the Universal Church. This honor ranks Thérèse with just thirty-two other saints in history and designates her as a special, authentic and powerful teacher of official Catholic doctrine for our time.

In his Apostolic Letter of proclamation, the Pope noted that through Thérèse's life and writings "God has offered the world a precise message . . . the 'little way,' which everyone can take because everyone is called to holiness." The Pope, expressing rare praise for the spirituality of a particular saint, said that Thérèse's teaching regarding holiness is "a special charism of Gospel wisdom." This "little way," the Pope added, "is nothing other than the Gospel way of holiness."

Thérèse's "little way" has entered the Christian consciousness as a way of holiness that is simple and accessible to everyone. It has gained widespread popularity, and yet Thérèse did not leave us a detailed or formal presentation and certainly not a theological exposition of her teaching, as Pope John Paul noted. Thérèse had no academic resources by which to formulate and present in any scholarly fashion her understanding of spirituality. Her formal education was limited to elementary schooling. Although Thérèse did not write a treatise on spirituality, she

has given us a description of her spirituality by the way she lived her life in her writings.

Thérèse wrote a considerable volume of material for a person of such limited formal education. The amount of her extant writings includes her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, together with some 266 letters, fifty-four poems, eight recreational plays that she composed for the community and twenty-one prayers. This amount of published writings by Thérèse exceeds, for example, that of St. John of the Cross. Yet, we would search in vain in Thérèse's work for a theological presentation of her "little way," this "Gospel way of holiness."

Of course, during her life (1873-1897), Thérèse shared her "little way" with the sisters with whom she lived and particularly with the novices who were directly under her care and whom she deliberately tried to form in her spirituality. She communicated her teaching to them primarily through the example of her life but also through the notes and the letters she wrote to them, her verbal comments, the prayers and poems she wrote on their behalf and the plays she composed that were staged by her and the novices for the entire community. All of this communication must have had considerable impact on her Carmelite community because after Thérèse's death, as the sisters came to appreciate both her autobio-

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graphical writings, with which they had now become familiar, and came to reminisce about her life and message, the community gradually was transformed. Céline, Thérèse's older sister who was also one of her novices, testified that this transformation of the community in conformity with the "little way" was Thérèse's first miracle after her death.

Thérèse's awareness of God's way in her life developed over her entire lifetime. It seems that only in her final years did she come to understand that what God was revealing to her was, in fact, a "way" of spirituality and one that could be helpful to others, one "which everyone can take, because everyone is called to holiness."

Thérèse, Céline tells us, used the words "little way" often in her verbal communications, especially with the novices, but in her autobiographical writings she uses the exact words "little way" just once, and that only during the last months of her life. It was not until very near the end of her life that she was able to express in depth what John Paul II would refer to as Thérèse's awareness of "the fundamental mystery, the reality of the Gospel."

Thérèse came to understand the "little way" as she reflected on and wrote about her lived experiences. She says on several occasions that she did not come to her understanding of God's ways from readings or from the teachings of others. The scriptures became a dialogic component and a source of illumination, amplification and validation of her developing insights into the divine wisdom that she was receiving from the Holy Spirit, whom she referred to as "the Doctor of Doctors."

During the final two years of her life, Thérèse came to understand more than ever two important things about herself. She knew, on the one hand, that throughout her life God had inspired in her a great desire to be a saint and, on the other hand, that after all her years of trying to fulfill that desire she was still filled with imperfections and was far from the holiness described in the lives of the saints and presented in the common spiritual teaching of her day.

Throughout her life, however, she held firmly to the fundamental truth about God, namely, that God is love, as St. John the Evangelist wrote so clearly. She understood that Divine Love was like fire, the fire of the Holy Spirit, desiring to unite and consume her into itself; and further, that it is of the nature of Divine Love to "humble itself," in order to fulfill its desire and therefore to "stoop down to nothingness" and to draw that nothingness into God. She knew that she was a beloved child, embraced by a Triune God, and she willingly allowed God's love to flow into her and through her as an expression of love of her sisters and love, finally, of the entire world. In short, she had discovered the "fundamental mystery" of the Gospel. The Pope confirmed this when he noted in his Apostolic Letter: "The core of her message is actually the mystery itself of God-love.... At the root, on the subjects' part, is the experience of being the Father's adoptive children in Jesus; this is the most authentic meaning of spiritual childhood...At the root again and standing before us, is our neighbor, others, for whose salvation we must collaborate with and in Jesus, with the same merciful love as his."

At the heart of Thérèse's way, then, was the understanding and the appreciation that she was weak and inadequate, like a child, like a "little grain of sand," like "nothingness," and that God, like the loving parent, like fire, like the spouse, evoked in her the very thoughts and desires whereby she became available and united to her beloved, empowering her to allow God's love to flow into and through her to her sisters and to the world. Her weakness and God's love, she as beloved child, God as merciful, loving parent — this twofold truth became the centerpiece of her way of spiritual childhood, the "little way." "Holiness," she came to understand, "consists of a disposition of the heart which makes us small and humble in the arms of God, aware of our weakness, yet confident — boldly confident — in the goodness of our Father."

As a spiritual teaching, the “little way” is, then, primarily a way of knowing and relating to God, to ourselves, to others and to the world. It is a path of contemplative awareness and receptiveness and loving response to God. It is a spiritual and theological message founded on the Gospel reality of incarnation: God “stooping down” in merciful love to us weak and sinful creatures, drawing us into relationship with the Trinity, and calling us to willingness, surrender and gratitude. It is a dying to self and abandonment into the arms of God. It is a participation in the paschal mystery.

God’s mercy empowered Thérèse’s daily feeble response to living in these great spiritual truths. Given Thérèse’s limited gifts of personality and character, as well as her emotional weakness, together with the limitations of the confined, little world of family and convent in which she lived, the only human response she was able to give to God was very imperfect, small and weak. She has no apostolic or personal spiritual achievements to her credit. For Thérèse, an important aspect of the “little way” was precisely the patience and the courage to persevere in the willingness to bear the pain of human weakness in her groping response to the love of Jesus. It is, perhaps, Thérèse’s emphasis on her human limitation and weakness and, therefore, on the trivialness of her response to God that has made Thérèse’s “little way” of spiritual childhood often seem to be simply the way of doing little things with good intentions.

THE WAY OF PERFECTION

Thérèse, of course, wanted to do “great” things for God; or, rather, she longed to be “great” in loving God in response to God’s love. She wanted to become a “great” saint, to love Jesus more than he had ever been loved before. But in her limitations, Thérèse knew she could achieve nothing of the kind. She knew herself well, and after some initially feeble attempts as a child and teen-ager at progress in the spiritual life, she came to understand that she was “too small to climb the rough stairway of perfection” as that “stairway” was described in the life and writings of the saints that she had studied. John of the Cross and Theresa of Avila, for example, must have been among the saints with whom Thérèse compared herself only to find that they were like “a mountain whose summit is lost in the clouds and [she was like] the obscure grain of sand trampled underfoot by the passersby.” And yet, she also knew that God called her to holiness. How was she to resolve this paradox of her great desire for sanctity in the midst of her littleness and weakness?

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She could not give up her desire because as she knew, that desire was really not her desire at all. Her longing for intimacy with God was inspired by God, was really God’s desire in her. The desire for holiness had been with her from her early years and grew in depth and clarity as she matured. In this desire, Thérèse seemed to be possessed by God, as her sister Marie would later describe her.

Yet Thérèse knew also that she was quite imperfect and spiritually weak. She tried to make sense of this paradox by understanding that “God cannot inspire unrealizable desires,” and so “I can, then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness.” If she could not eliminate the moral and personal weaknesses in herself, then she would have to bear with herself, “such as I am with all my imperfections.” In this sense, Thérèse came to know that she would have to go to God, or, rather, would have to allow God to come to her, by a way in which her weaknesses and imperfections were compatible with the desire for holiness. She would have to “seek out a means of going to heaven by a little way, a way that is very straight, very short, and totally new,” a way that did not involve “climbing the rough stairway of perfection,” as the common spiritual wisdom of the times understood that climb.

THE “OLD WAY”

The “little way” of holiness that Thérèse was seeking would have to be “totally new” because the “old” way of perfection was inaccessible to her. The popular understanding of holiness influential in Thérèse’s time claimed that to be holy meant simply to be perfect in the sense of being without sins and without weaknesses, and with virtues and notable spiritual

God was often presented as the God of justice, frequently as the God of retribution, and sometimes as the God of vengeance

accomplishments. The hagiography of the times contributed to this idea of perfection as Gospel holiness by describing the lives of the saints as usually including displays of heroic virtues, complete self-mastery, notable austerities, supernatural visions, profound prayer experiences and outstanding apostolic achievements. Some of these descriptions may have been exaggerated, but the common notion was that a holy person had achieved a high level of asceticism, the acquisition of virtue and the elimination of moral weaknesses and sins. All of these achievements were understood to be either part of holiness or manifestations of it. Sometimes the characterization of holiness seemed to imply that the saints had achieved all of this as a result of their own persistent, willful effort. The saints' constant cries for God's mercy in the face of what they believed to be their continued sinfulness and weakness were discounted as further confirmation of their heroic humility.

The text of Matthew: "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" was a passage sometimes used to substantiate the call to Gospel holiness as indeed a call to flawless perfection. This understanding of Gospel holiness was also reinforced by an image of God as an accountant, scoring virtues and defects, balancing on the scales of justice the weight of sins against the weight of virtue and spiritual achievements. In Thérèse's day, God was often presented primarily as the God of justice, frequently as the God of retribution, and sometimes as the God of vengeance. Some of this emphasis no doubt was a misunderstanding of some scriptural texts, and some was the influence of Jansenism, which continued through the lifetime of Thérèse despite its condemnation as a

heresy more than a century earlier. The focus was placed on God's wrath; thus, even devotion to the Sacred Heart, which was becoming popular in Thérèse's time, emphasized not so much God's love implied in the symbol of Jesus' heart, but rather the need for reparation to Jesus' suffering, which was caused by human sin. Such reparation called for additional spiritual achievements of prayer and penance.

Thérèse was exposed to these kinds of presentations of holiness in the sermons she heard as a child and in some of the spiritual literature she later came across. On one occasion during her time at the Benedictine boarding school, when she was about eleven or twelve years old, she became physically ill during a school retreat when the preacher emphasized an image of God as a God of vengeance and wrath, and focused on the inability of the children before him to know with any certainty whether they were worthy of heaven or hell.

Later, in the Carmelite convent, Thérèse was not sheltered from the influence of Jansenism. Some of the personal and communal spirituality of the religious sisters at the convent was tainted with the heresy, and many of the books in the convent library could be read in the spirit of Jansenism. In addition, most of the priests who preached the community's annual retreat presented God as vindictive and punitive. During these retreats, Thérèse continued to have the same reaction of physical distress as she did in her youth.

Some of these presentations also suggested that, because this attainment of complete, flawless perfection was reserved to the "great saints," concessions were to be made for ordinary, weak Christians. In this view, the spiritual task was not actually to achieve perfection but rather to strive constantly to be perfect, knowing full well that the accomplishment of this goal would be impossible. In the face of the impossibility of attaining perfection, the emphasis, then, was shifted to the ego-enhancing willfulness of continuing to strive.

In short, Thérèse heard during her lifetime that holiness and human weakness were incompatible. The idea at the time was that a holy person, usually through strength of will, dogged determination and often self-violence, had completely overcome personal defects, had acquired total self-mastery, had achieved an extraordinary level of prayer and virtue and no longer committed sin. In other words, the idea of Gospel holiness had generally come to be equated with willfulness and moral perfectionism.

If this was holiness, Thérèse rightly knew herself to fall miserably short. Although as a young religious she believed her confessor when he told her she had never committed a grave sin, she knew within herself she had innumerable human limitations. She had experienced the distress of inner conflicts that arose from the struggle between good and evil in her heart: the feelings and thoughts she knew contaminated her spirit of compassion and love, her failures in patience and charity, her constant sleep during prayer, and the ever present capacity to stray from the path of personal authenticity, truth and inner freedom to which she knew she was called. All these limitations and weaknesses, Thérèse believed, blocked the working of the Holy Spirit in her life.

In light of the prevailing notion of perfection, Thérèse experienced these weaknesses as obstacles to her desire for sanctity. She knew that she could not, with all of her willpower, completely eliminate her weaknesses or acquire the needed virtue; she knew that she did not have the personal resources to endure the prescribed penances; she simply did not have the stomach for the required self-violence and, therefore, could not reach holiness by the way that was popularly presented.

SEARCHING FOR A NEW WAY

In the context of her intense desire for holiness, it was to Thérèse's credit that she had the self-knowledge and honesty to know and admit her constant personal weaknesses and failures. It was also to Thérèse's credit that she had the courage and the determination not to give up her God-inspired desire to be a saint. It was additionally to Thérèse's credit that she had the self-confidence and the patience to undertake the search for a "totally new" way of holiness that would resolve her dilemma. And, finally, it was to Thérèse's great credit that she believed that her understanding of this new way would happen by God's providential action in her ordinary experiences of life, through the teaching of Jesus in her heart and without the assistance of formal theological or biblical studies, of which she was not capable, or even of adequate personal spiritual direction, to which she did not have access.

In this search for a new way, Thérèse was primarily alone, unassisted by some of the usual spiritual helps, on a great personal journey into a dark unknown against the conventional understanding of spirituality of her day. On the one hand, Thérèse had to honor what she believed to be God's call to her to become a great saint; on the other hand, she had to

In this search for a new way, Thérèse was primarily alone, unassisted by some of the usual spiritual helps

bear the pain of personal darkness in the search for a "totally new" way.

SIGHTING THE NEW WAY

The new way of spirituality was, of course, the Gospel way of holiness itself, needing to be rediscovered in our own time, as Pope John Paul II has said. As the Gospel way of sanctity, the "little way" is not totally new at all; it is simply the way taught by Jesus. Thérèse's genius was that she recognized, as the Pope noted, this "special charism of Gospel wisdom."

How does this way of holiness compare with the notion of religious perfection in the conventional understanding of Thérèse's day? It is simply this: The way of holiness lived and taught by Jesus flowed from God's love and focused essentially on the quality of a person's relationship with God, with oneself, with one's neighbor and with the world. It did not concern itself essentially with a person's willful attainment of a certain level of asceticism and prayer, nor the gift of visions, nor the achievement of perfection in the sense of fulfilling the law or acquiring virtue and eliminating vice. Thérèse knew that the Gospel way of holiness had to do essentially with love: God's love of us and our response in love.

Thérèse saw that Jesus' teachings of holiness are not driven by fear of a wrathful and vindictive God, and do not have to do primarily with religious righteousness and certainly not with the violence of self-mastery and the willfulness of perfectionism. She understood that the text of Matthew, "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," is not a call to moral perfectionism. In the context of the verse, and in the

The path of holiness had originally seemed to Thérèse to be like a “rough stairway,” a path requiring tremendous personal effort

wider context of the complete Gospel, the text is clearly about love: the Father's love for us, particularly for us who are not perfect, who are the “bad” and the “unjust,” and a call to us to share that love with others, especially “the enemy,” that is, those precisely whom we experience to be bad and unjust. Thérèse knew that a high level of morality and self-mastery, prayer and detachment flowed from God's love in the human heart as the heart responded in love. But the achievements of moral rectitude, religious righteousness and self-mastery do not of themselves guarantee cooperation in the flow of compassion and love that Jesus identified as the perfection of the “heavenly Father.” Thérèse desired to be consumed by and to participate in God's love and compassion and there find her holiness.

Even in her early years, Thérèse seems to have had, through her own providential experience of human love, a sense that Gospel holiness was all about love and particularly about God's love for her and God's love working in her. Especially as she came to the final years of her life, her relationship with God flowered into the profound awareness that ultimately it was God's love itself which constituted her holiness, and not her own willful achievements of any kind. In her “Act of Oblation to Merciful Love” composed at the end of her life, she gave her “little way” simple and profound expression when she said, “I beg You, O my God, to be yourself my sanctity.” Perfection in the sense of achieving any level of moral righteousness or self-mastery was clearly no longer the issue for Thérèse. The governing orientation of her life had become the purity of her relationship with Jesus, expressed in her willingness to receive God's love and

to share that love with others. It was all now a matter of abandoning herself into the arms of God in confidence and love: “I wish then, to be clothed in Your own Justice,” Thérèse prayed, “and to receive from Your Sacred Love the eternal possession of Yourself.”

ENTERING THE NEW WAY

How did Thérèse come upon this “totally new,” yet Gospel way? What was Thérèse's personal experience that led to this understanding of “Gospel wisdom,” as the Pope calls it?

The path of holiness had originally seemed to Thérèse to be like a “rough stairway,” a path requiring tremendous personal effort, culminating in sinless perfection. In the face of that image, Thérèse felt completely inadequate, a little child. It was the same feeling she had had when, as a two-year-old, she had tried to climb the rough stairway to the second level in her family home. At that time her mother had described Thérèse attempting the impossible: “She will not climb the stairs all alone, but cries at each step: ‘Mamma, Mamma!’” This image of personal inadequacy came back to Thérèse as an adult, and now she experienced herself in the same difficulty. She simply could not, by her own effort and willfulness, overcome her weaknesses to climb the stairway of perfection. She needed the help of a loving parent, and she was willing to receive that help from God.

THE IMAGE OF THE ELEVATOR

Thérèse found the answer to her dilemma of trying “to climb the rough stairway of perfection” in considering a metaphor based on a recent invention. At the time of Thérèse's childhood, the elevator had just been installed in some taller buildings in France and Italy. She may have experienced riding in an elevator while staying in upscale hotels during her pilgrimage with her sister Céline and her father to Rome to ask the Pope's permission to enter the Carmelite convent. She was fourteen years old.

If you used an elevator, Thérèse learned from experience, you simply did not need to climb stairs anymore. That revelation must have struck Thérèse as delightful. And, perhaps, as children do, she and Céline may have ridden the elevator playfully, just to have the thrill of rising effortlessly, the feeling of falling freely and the sensations of the quick, compressing stops: feelings exaggerated by the primitive mechanics of the early elevators. It is easy to imagine Thérèse, who would describe other whimsical experiences that occurred on the pilgrimage, as riding the elevator just for fun.

The elevator became for Thérèse the image that opened for her the solution to her dilemma. With the elevator, everyone; especially children, could attain a higher level without being hindered by their inadequacy or littleness. Thérèse applied the same principle to the spiritual life.

Thérèse had pictured the spiritual life as climbing, like reaching a higher floor in a house. According to the conventional wisdom of the time, a stairway or a ladder was the only way to get to the higher level. Thérèse was familiar with these images used in the current spiritual teachings describing the ascent to holiness. Various authors and preachers referred to stairs and ladders reaching up to levels of perfection, to degrees of humility, to steps and stages of prayer and virtue, to ways of eliminating sin: stairs, stages or ladders all to be climbed or entered into, often with great effort, step by step. These images meant that only the spiritually strong and powerful had a chance for holiness. But with an elevator, everything was different. If there were an elevator in the spiritual life, then the “effort” and “struggle” to climb a stairway or a ladder could be addressed in a “totally new” way. Could the spiritual life have such a spiritual elevator whereby people could get to God without climbing a stairway or a ladder? The question must have pressed in on Thérèse.

If such an elevator existed, then Thérèse could see herself simply being carried up to heaven and completely bypassing the need to climb the impossible stairway of the perfection. Already in her prayer Thérèse had known an important secret of God’s love, a secret that often escaped the wise and learned who could and did reach a certain level on the stairway of perfection. It was the secret revealed to the little children who could not climb at all. Thérèse’s secret was in knowing that it is of the nature of Divine love to stoop down and to lift us up and transform us. In the early pages of her autobiographical writings, she refers to this truth. She wrote that she understood it was to the little ones who were inadequate in the spiritual life — the child “who knows only how to make ... feeble cries; ... [and] the poor savage” who doesn’t even know about sin or virtue, — “it is to their hearts that God deigns to lower Himself. When coming down in this way, God manifests His infinite grandeur. Just as the sun shines simultaneously on the tall cedars and on each little flower as though it were alone on the earth, so Our Lord is occupied particularly with each soul as though there were no others like it.” She expressed this truth even more fully later when, discovering that her place in the mystical body was love, she wrote: “Yes, in order that Love be fully satisfied, it is necessary that It lower itself, and

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that It lower Itself to nothingness and transform this nothingness into fire.”

That God would stoop down in love, as Love, because God is Love and such is the nature of Love, to stoop down and love us gratuitously — this truth took on a new dimension in Thérèse’ understanding. Now, this image of being embraced by God who stoops in love and scoops her up gave Thérèse a delightful new insight and a joyful hope. And, of course, for Thérèse “the elevator which must raise me to heaven is Your arms, O Jesus!”

To rest in Jesus’ arms had been, for Thérèse, since early childhood, an image that had often given her great consolation. Now that image took on new meaning. Not only could she rest secure and in peace in Jesus’ arms, she could also be carried, in fulfillment of God’s desire in her, to the perfection God wished for her. It was no longer a matter of struggling up a difficult stairway; it was a matter of being scooped up by God’s love. And, further, to be carried meant that the entire need to grow out of the weaknesses and inadequacies in order to reach perfection was transformed.

Now it was not a matter of attaining the impossible perfection of achieving virtue and eliminating defects and sins. It was not a matter of willful self-mastery or spiritual accomplishments of any kind. Thérèse understood that perfection — true Gospel holiness — became rather a matter of accepting weaknesses and littleness, while at the same time becoming more trusting and confident in God’s power. If Thérèse were to be carried by God, then, “for this I had no need to grow up, but rather I had to remain little and become this more and more.” Her

These are the sentiments of Thérèse's "little way": that God may enfold her in mercy and love

"totally new" way, then, would be her willingness to remain little in her weaknesses and imperfections but with total openness to love and with complete abandonment in God's arms. It would be God's love that transformed her and raised her in holiness, God's love and her willing response. "Perfection seems simple to me," Thérèse wrote at the end of her life. "I see it is sufficient to recognize one's nothingness and to abandon oneself as a child into God's arms."

For Thérèse, abandonment was clearly not passivity in the spiritual life; it was rather a deep awareness of the reality that the great desire for holiness, for union in love with God, would not be fulfilled as an act of personal achievement. Her weakness alerted her to the reality that holiness is all God's doing. Her contribution was to surrender in gratefulness, and in the willingness to be what God wanted her to be, even if that meant she could not, with all of her goodwill, herself climb the "rough stairway of perfection." In short, she understood that holiness for her would consist in being carried by God in confidence and love.

It was not, then, that she needed to become strong; it was that she needed to remain little and become increasingly little, so as not to be a burden when God stooped to lift her. She needed to become more humble in conformity to God's will. That is, she needed to die to herself to be raised up by God. She understood Jesus' invitation in the Gospel, the paschal mystery of everyday life: to die daily to her self-will, even to the self-will that might be hidden in the spiritual ambition of being holy. It was a matter of allowing God's will to unfold in the very ordinary, everyday experiences of life and of responding in confidence and love. In this way God would stoop down

and lift her to that degree of perfection that God had prepared for her.

GOSPEL HOLINESS

This understanding of the "little way" had been growing in Thérèse's self-awareness for many years, especially as she came under the influence of the Gospel text, the writings of Saint Paul and a more mature reading of her spiritual parents, Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross. But it was only during the last years of her short life that she came to comprehend and appreciate more fully how this spiritual way was unfolding in her own life. In writing her memories toward the end of her life, Thérèse began to describe more carefully how she had experienced God stooping down and lifting her up, and how her weaknesses and failings were not obstacles to God's loving work in her life.

In the very last paragraphs of *Story of a Soul*, Thérèse mentions that she has "only to cast a glance in the Gospels" and immediately knows that she will not "advance like the Pharisee." But rather, "filled with confidence," she will imitate the publican's humble prayer.

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican, which Jesus proclaimed to those who believed in their own righteousness and perfection, became an important teaching for Thérèse. She saw that the Pharisee and the publican each personified a "way" of spirituality. Each went to the temple to pray, to contact God; one was successful; the other was not. The Pharisee thanked God for his religious successes and achievements, that is, for his "perfection." The publican, however, desirous of holiness but keenly aware of his sinfulness and his complete inability to attain the perfection prescribed by the law and presented by the spiritual leaders of his day, simply prayed that God would have mercy on him, a sinner. The publican was justified; the Pharisee was not. The publican's prayer, "O God be merciful to me a sinner," is a simple and honest acknowledgement of his weakness and sinfulness, and a humble request that God be the God of mercy and love in his life. These are the sentiments of Thérèse's "little way": that God may stoop down and enfold her in mercy and love. Thérèse made her own prayer an echo of the prayer of the publican when, at the end of *Story of a Soul*, she prayed again using the image of Divine Love as fire: "Jesus, draw me into the flames of your love."

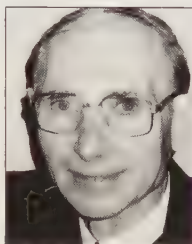
This parable of the Pharisee and the publican illumined Thérèse's spirituality at the end of her life. She understood that holiness, her union with God, was being achieved not by herself and her efforts, but by

God being God in her life; that is, by Love, by the Holy Spirit, in mercy stooping down and raising her up in her weakness and sinfulness to holiness and "perfection." Thérèse saw that Jesus' teaching in this parable was unfolding in her own spiritual life. Her "little way" is the way of the publican, Jesus' own image of the person of Gospel holiness.

Pope John Paul II remarked in the Apostolic Letter proclaiming Thérèse a Doctor: "One can say with conviction about Thérèse of Lisieux that the Spirit of God allowed her heart to reveal directly to the people of our time the fundamental mystery, the reality of the Gospel." Nothing is more fundamental in the Gospel message than the reality Thérèse discovered: that it is of the nature of Divine Love to stoop down, fill us with love and to draw us to God — all of us, not just the "good" and the "just." Jesus himself is, of course, the personification of this very truth. The mystery of the incarnation is nothing other than God's stooping down to us, coming to us in the person of Jesus, to draw all things to himself. Jesus' life of love and compassion is the expression of this truth, and Jesus' death and resurrection are the completion of the paschal mystery on which Thérèse's teaching is focused. Thérèse, in her littleness, the Pope said, grasped for our time "the very heart of the message of Revelation in a fresh and original vision," the "little way."

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Television Violence and Adult Aggression

According to a team of University of Michigan psychologists, childhood viewing of violent television programs, especially those that depict "good" characters as perpetrators of the violence, may have an effect on adult violent behavior. The team studied a large number of children between the ages of 6 and 10 on their viewing of violent television shows. Fifteen years later the psychologists were able to collect data on more than half of them, now in their twenties. They found that both men and women who were more prone to violent behavior as

adults had viewed significantly more violent television programs as children, had identified with TV characters of the same sex who engaged in violence and had perceived the violent programs as realistic.

In the past, studies had shown the short-term effects of viewing violence in the media. This study, described in *Developmental Psychology* (Vol. 39, No. 2) and reported on in *Monitor in Psychology* (May, 2003, p. 13) indicates that such viewing can have long-term effects.

A Layman's Ministry



The following is an interview in Q&A format conducted by Sister Brenda Hermann, M.S.B.T., for HUMAN DEVELOPMENT with Tom Ulrich, Vice-president of Training, Convening and Mission, Catholic Charities USA. Ulrich has spent his life in service to the Catholic Church.

HD: Tom, tell us about you.

Ulrich: I am just a simple guy, born and raised in southern Indiana, the Midwest of the USA. Those Midwestern roots are strong in me. I am one of six children. I had loving, working-class parents who believed strongly in their faith. We all went to Catholic schools. Most of all, however, we were connected to our parish, and the life of the family and the community revolved around this faith community. I was an altar server, a Cub Scout and anything else the parish offered us in the way of volunteer activity.

HD: Sounds idyllic.

Ulrich: In a way, it was exactly that through my early years. In high school into college, however, the world began to change drastically for me. It was the era of the Vietnam War, the Second Vatican

Council and the cultural revolution. The concept of the parish, my place of belonging and my identity as a Catholic, began to change. It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. I argued — lovingly — with my parents and siblings about the church and her change. It was an extremely stimulating time for me. It was also a tense time. I loved the way the church was going.

HD: Your parents meant what to you during this time of chaos?

Ulrich: I think that I got a clearer picture of them and their values. My mom taught me to care deeply about others, especially the poor. My dad was a member of a union. He experienced what every man did who stood with the union during a period of layoffs. The members of the union come to our rescue as a family. As I reflect on that time, I was developing within me a very strong sense of justice, social justice. I had the concepts of social justice but not the teachings. As a result, when I went on to college at the University of Southern Illinois, I chose psychology as a way of helping others. During that time, I fell in love with Mary Jane, my wife. She was passionate about the church and her faith. Now I was argu-

ing with her parents about religion as much as I was with my own. We married in our early 20s. At the time it did not seem so young. I look back at it now and realize that we grew up together. We were young.

HD: *What happened after college?*

Ulrich: I went to work for Catholic Charities hoping to use my degree in psychology with the poor. I soon discovered that I really cared more about working with the poor than I did about counseling. It was at this time that the second major event impacted my life as well as my marriage.

HD: *And that was?*

Ulrich: My wife and I were part of a small faith community. During this time, we were exposed to the social teachings of the Catholic Church. This happened through a very good priest friend. I have not been the same. For the first time, everything I had been thinking and feeling connected. It was a truly sacred moment for us both. Our marriage took on another dimension. Social justice became pivotal to our marriage together. At the same time, we were blessed with the birth of our baby daughter, Katie.

Mary Jane and I decided that it was time that I went on to get my master's degree. This time I chose social work and specialized in community organizing. I believed that this was the best way for me to combine my love of the church and her teachings with the work for the poor. It also provided me with a way to look at the parish. After getting the degree, I worked in parish-based social ministry in Covington, Kentucky. All this was part of our faith journey together.

HD: *How did your move away from Evansville and your families affect you?*

Ulrich: It affected us very deeply. We decided to return. I was asked to come back to Evansville to work in parish social ministry. Mary Jane is from a family of eleven siblings, and I am one of six. We had to make some choices for ourselves and for our daughter. Family means a great deal to both of us.

HD: *What was sustaining you during this time of your life, outside of your family?*

Ulrich: One of my greatest sources of strength was my parish priest. For many years Father Earl had been a close friend and mentor. He was a very strong point of connection for me to my faith life

and to parish life. He was passionately interested in the poor and social justice issues. He actually had a cross burned on his property during the civil rights era. This connection for me, as a layman, to a priest of such passion and commitment is one of the strong points of my life. Father Earl radicalized me. I often look at that as a model of the close collaboration needed between priest and laity. It was very important for us to move back and rejoin his parish. We got really connected back into parish life. Mary Jane has a beautiful voice and cantors in the parish. Mary Jane is a nester, and I have wanderlust. Being rooted at this time was essential for us and for our marriage.

HD: *What happened next?*

Ulrich: I was nominated to the board of the Campaign for Human Development, now called the Catholic Campaign, or CCHD. I served on the board for three years and then went on to become its national chairperson. I was inundated with work in community organizing. I became connected to one of the training programs of CCHD called TARGET. Daughter Katie was now six years old, and this meant a move to Washington, D.C.

HD: *That would have been a significant move.*

Ulrich: Mary Jane and I are committed to living a simple lifestyle. We had a very simple home in the inner city in Evansville. We sold it and with \$28,000 in our pockets, we thought we might find something comparable in D.C. We soon discovered that that amount of money in Washington is pocket change. But we found a place outside D.C. We connected to our local parish, and I worked for two years in CCHD's education programs. After that time, I wanted to get back into diocesan life. By this time we also had had our second child, a boy named Jacob.

HD: *Did you follow this desire for diocesan life?*

Ulrich: We went to the Diocese of Rockville Centre, N.Y. I became the Diocesan Director of Parish Social Ministry. I was flattered to be asked by Rockville Centre because it was a premier diocese. It proved to be a very difficult but stimulating experience for us both and for the family. Our daughter moved as a senior in high school, and our son was a sixth grader. These two wonderful children moved at these critical times in their lives. The children saw this as an adventure. New York was a struggle for me personally and for our

marriage. Eventually, we chose to leave there. I applied for the opening to work with Catholic Charities at the national level. Washington, D.C., became our new home again. My daughter chose to remain at St. John's University, while my son requested just one thing with the move: to go back into the same neighborhood. Many of his friends were still there.

HD: *The job with national Catholic Charities — was that of vice-president of one of the divisions?*

Ulrich: Yes. The division that oversees parish-based social ministry. In a way, it is the completing of a circle. I began with the great love of the parish as one of its members. I saw the need to organize and convene people at the parish level, and I knew that all of this must be connected to knowledge of one's faith, especially the social teachings. I am now in a position to make it happen.

HD: *How did Mary Jane fare during all these moves?*

Ulrich: Mary Jane is now the town clerk. She knows everything about the town in which we live. We had decided early in our marriage that there would be a stay-at-home parent. She was the best one to do this. I was always very involved with raising the children. We lived on the very low pay of the church employee and one person working.

We wanted to be there for the children. They are now 25 and 20. They are my heroes.

HD: *An interesting life. Tom, our readers will be wondering, how did this layman remain so faithful to church ministry and keep such a vibrant, healthy marriage and family? How do you do this?*

Ulrich: I cannot answer that question without reflecting on Mary Jane and my two wonderful children. It is about us. They are my first commitment. At the same time, I am me, and the church is part of how I humanly define myself. The same is true of Mary Jane. Our passion for each other and family is deeply connected to our passion for our God and our church. I cannot even articulate how this happens. It is "us." It is me. It is woven together. Mary Jane and I are deeply connected. We are committed to each other every day. We have good honest communication and trust. We have deep common values. We have a community of friends and family that supports us. We also have a community of faith. To live out our passion did not provide a lot of money. We decided that simplicity of life was a way to live and serve. Our stewardship is also exercised in how we give

of our time to each other and to the community. Our daughter Katie is now married and has a child. We are now grandparents. It is a wonderful time in our lives.

HD: *It appears that there have been some pivotal things in your life that have shaped you.*

Ulrich: Yes, the Vietnam War, the exposure to social teachings, racial justice, my knowledge of community organizing, work with the poor in emergency assistance and many individuals who deeply influenced me.

HD: *Do you think that you are extraordinary in all of this?*

Ulrich: Who, me? I am one of the most common people you could ever meet. Most people, given the same opportunity to reflect, as you are asking me to do, would reveal a journey full of moments of dissonance, excitement, jarring reality. And they would make choices that would move them on. These moments would probably have important people involved in the events.

HD: *What has been the most difficult for you?*

Ulrich: I can think of distinct things that have happened in this journey. Each of them, while painful, in the long run provided unique opportunities for me and for our marriage to mature. The time in New York stands out significantly. Mary Jane and I are very faithful people to each other as well as to our family. There were many stresses, twists and turns that neither of us could have anticipated. We discovered, all over again, that honest, tough communication is the only way a marriage survives the unexpected. Something had to change, and it has always been clear that the marriage is first. It is always painful to have to look at yourself and realize that you have to change. While the surroundings may have to change, I knew that I needed to do that as well. It took a lot of self-reflection.

HD: *How has your image of God changed?*

Ulrich: I am presently in a parish where the theology of the priest is very different from my own. When I go to church now, it creates another moment of self-reflection. Who is my God? What do I really believe? I started out in life seeing God as the old man, holding the book of sins. I have moved way beyond that image. I was an altar server with the old Latin Mass. The exposure to the poor, to Martin Luther King and the delving deeply into the social teachings has brought me

face-to-face with a very incarnational, human, loving Jesus. I truly believe that we are made in the image of God. God is love, God is relational, working through people. I read and ponder scripture. We belong to a small faith group. I have moved to a greater understanding of the meaning of solidarity with the world. We are such a small global village. My marriage to Mary Jane has been a powerful lens through which to find God. We are not pious as a couple. But I think that we are holy, in that we do strive to forgive, to be aware of each other's needs, to be sensitive. Living that on a daily basis is holiness. Especially when we are arguing with each other.

HD: *Where do you think you would have been without all of this?*

Ulrich: I can't even imagine anything other than this path. I have no idea. I am where I am supposed to be.

HD: *Tom, as you look back on your journey, any regrets?*

Ulrich: Yes, just one. I was never pushed to stay in baseball. Sports are a love, but baseball was a passion. I did not give it my all. I did not concentrate on it. I am now 50 years old. Somehow I wonder what I could have been if I had pursued my dream to "play the game." I was good at it. Now, don't take me wrong. I would never choose any other path but the one I took. Yet, at times, there is this little gnawing in me. Could I have been one of the greats? I am a rabid fan and go to as many games as I can.

HD: *Does the love and passion for baseball connect to the love and passion you have for what you do now?*

Ulrich: Baseball is a lens out of which I can also see life. It is about an internal importance, not

achievement. To know that one has been the best one can be, even if there is no "winning." In the movie, *Chariots of Fire*, there is a Scottish runner, Eric Little, whose sister wants him to be a missionary in China. He tells her that he will do it but first he must run. "But God made me fast and when I run, I am doing His glory." The part I regret is that I may not have developed the gift.

HD: *Tom, what would you say to a layperson today who says to you, I want to work for the church?*

Ulrich: I would encourage them. Develop your own faith life, and be confident in it. The church is a truly great place to work. Love this church. Just remember that this church is both human and divine. We have recently seen its human side exposed all over the news, across the world. Its leaders are fallible. We have made some really big mistakes as a church. Yet, we have a theology, a body of teachings like no other. If you work for the church, you must be willing and able to confront your own sin. For example, it was very painful for me to confront my own racism. As I move deeper into the social Gospel, I see my own weakness as well as my God-given gifts. My oldest brother's recent death was very painful for me as well as for my parents. I don't think that anyone gets through these things without a loving supportive community of family and friends. If I am going to work for the church, this is a must in my life. There must be a community in my life. Sometimes there are very dry periods. Have fun with it all. Analyze it. But love it.

HD: *Any final words to the readers?*

Ulrich: Understand that this is very serious work. But never take yourself too seriously.

Training Spiritual Directors in Thailand

Miriam Cleary, O.S.U.

Six months ago I returned from Thailand and, ever since, this article has been trying to see the light of day. It has finally been born, thanks to the contributions made by a group of the women who had followed the training program for spiritual directors that is described here. The women were able to shape my early attempts so the article reflected more truly their cultural and actual experience. Like the program itself, this article has been an experience of intercultural contemplative dialogue.

Much had changed in the seven years since I first set foot in the beautiful country of Thailand. Buddhism is still a pattern of life for the Thai people and a predominant factor in its culture, art, concepts and sense of well being. It marks the people with a pervasive spirit of kindness. Yet while Buddhism governs the daily life of the people, the impact of globalization is also evident in the McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken and Starbucks Coffee shops that abound. However, in the north, in Chiangmai, the countryside still retains its idyllic and pastoral nature, in spite of the impact of modernity. And the Jesuit Retreat Center, known locally as "Jet Rin" ("Seven Fountains"), is an ideal place for retreat and reflection. It exudes serenity, and the flowing, globe-shaped fountain in front of the center's large chapel

evokes a contemplative spirit in those who come seeking inner peace.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS IN THE MAKING

In this land of the Reclining Buddha, in the setting of Jet Rin, I had the challenging task of training spiritual directors to be for five weeks. The seeds had been sown some years earlier by Mary Ann Scofield, R.S.M., and Ellen Guerin, R.S.M. And Janet Ruffing, R.S.M., was completing several sessions on spiritual direction as I arrived in Thailand. There also had been a series of thirty-day retreats, some directed, that were arranged by the Sister Formation Conference for women religious preparing for final vows. The "seed" was sprouting in the need and the desire for more Thai spiritual directors, and the time seemed ripe to undertake a training program to begin to provide them. Under the auspices of the Major Superiors of Religious Women of Thailand, I found myself undertaking the project.

The participants numbered twenty-one eager women from twelve different religious congregations, seven of which are local and the rest international. I knew from the start that my background was different from theirs. They were all Thai, having been

steeped in Buddhist teaching from birth and inculcated with Catholic religious principles. But they were also diverse among themselves in societal, cultural and personal backgrounds. Given these cultural differences, it was a bit of a miracle that the program was sustained through a regimen of five hours a day, five days a week for five weeks. (Of course, the translators helped enormously and unwittingly added some moments of both surprise and laughter.) These spiritual direction devotees were so eager to learn they overcame any and all communication barriers.

Each morning we gathered for prayer. The participants prepared the daily morning and evening prayer in conjunction with the themes of the day, making use of dynamic contemporary and scriptural readings and songs. The input I provided at the sessions, as well as the readings the group did, was taken up in small group discussions in which the Thai language could be used. It was a cooperative learning experience as members convened in a large group to share what had been gleaned in the small group discussion sessions. Skills practice in spiritual direction was done in groups of three, which from time to time included a supervisor fluent in Thai. These practice sessions prepared the participants for the fourth week's activity of peer tutelage in which the group was divided in half, each member of one half directing a member of the other half in three days of directed prayer and receiving personal supervision each day. Thus, over a six-day period, everyone in the program had the opportunity to direct another person for three days of prayer.

During the fifth and last week of the program, a shortened version of the Experience Cycle was introduced to focus on the different cultural and social forces operative in society. This tool, developed for the training program in New York with which I am connected, is aimed at helping directors notice the impact such forces have on persons' spiritual lives. Unfortunately, time did not allow for a thorough treatment of the cycle because attention needed to be given to evaluation, termination and plans for the future. To facilitate this last, four of the participants, from different congregations and regions of the country, agreed to plan future meetings of the group as a means of continuing their training and practice. The hope is that another training program might be offered for a new group in the future.

INSERTION INTO THE CULTURE

To keep everyone aware of ordinary daily life, trips to various locations were organized. One such trip afforded everyone the opportunity to exchange experience with a Buddhist monk and scholar, Dr. Phra Saneh Infong, who shared his insights on prayer and spirituality according to his tradition. Other trips took the group to centers at which the various religious congregations are in ministry. Some of these congregations work with hill tribe girls, providing them with special education, thus opening them to alternatives to a life of prostitution in Thailand's cities. Another congregation conducts an orphanage for babies and young children who are HIV positive and whose parents have died from AIDS. There is a women's center where displaced women from the neighboring countries such as Laos and Cambodia seek refuge. This center also provides vocational training for women from rural areas. And then there was the visit to the "Golden Triangle," where Thailand, Laos and Burma meet. The Triangle is beautiful to behold, but its name is tainted with the drug and gambling activities that flourish there.

Another interesting tour took us to "Doi Tung," a site close to the hearts of the Thai people because it was the residence of the Princess Mother, beloved mother of the present King. The house and gardens are of exquisite beauty. And the place is also the site of an environmental and socioeconomic development initiated by the late Princess Mother during the last phase of her life. She was so determined to help the rural farmers she succeeded in inculcating in them her own deep care of the land, thus bringing about significant land reform in that part of northern Thailand.

Each time we returned to Jet Rin, we spent some time reflecting on and sharing what we had experienced during our trips. I wanted the participants to be attentive to the various forces at work in the people and the places we had visited, as well as in themselves, in an effort to view the program in the context of the world around us. Did these contacts impact each one's relationship with God? Did they influence the scope of their prayer, personal and communal? How might we explore together the various responses we found within ourselves to try to understand where God's Spirit was at work? I wanted us to use the firsthand information that we gained to adapt the spiritual direction course to the real-life situation of the participants. While ancient Buddhist practices

are a part of their birthright, there is also in the Thai people a great interest in the new. In Thailand, "localization" and "globalization" have met and are in mortal struggle with each other. That fact has to be recognized in both the training and the practice of spiritual directors. As is true whenever spiritual direction training is brought into another culture, trainers and models of training must be flexible, creative, realistic and devoted to unearthing the wisdom and the potential within would be directors.

One thing that surfaced clearly in the course of the program is that in Thailand there has been relatively little understanding of or support for spiritual direction. The cultural attachment to hierarchy, seniority, position, etc., makes it difficult to create the atmosphere required to carry out the role of spiritual director as listener and confidant as we understand it in the West. Opening oneself to another is culturally difficult for the Thai as well as for other peoples of the East because of the value placed on "face." The Thai tend to be shy and to act cautiously so as not to blunder, or they keep quiet and go with the crowd with a coy smile but also with a perceptive mind. People will consult doctors for physical complaints but will not consult others for the needs of the inner self. Only recently has spiritual direction been talked about, and often it is not deemed necessary. Even when it is sought out, it is difficult to find trained and capable spiritual directors who are available and approachable.

MUTUAL TRANSFORMATION

Despite the language and cultural barriers we were able to achieve a spirit of group cohesiveness and mutual learning. Participants claimed that the workshop helped them to meet and share more comfortably in both large and small groups, as well as to be able to direct and be directed during the practice sessions. They appreciated the new freedom of spirit, unity and spontaneity that brought with them joy, lightness of heart and peace. Their prayer deepened and became more personal, which led to more intimacy with the Divine Presence. They became more mature in their understanding of their relationship with the Divine and could adapt and practice what they learned according to their country's culture. Very importantly, trust and love were developed and nurtured among them.

One thing that stood out for me was the need for a contemplative attitude. As spiritual directors must bring such a humble openness to the work of the Holy Spirit to spiritual direction sessions, so those who develop training programs for spiritual directors

must bring the same attitude to their work. Spiritual directors and trainers are co workers with the Spirit and not the "directors" of the work to be done. I was forced to learn that lesson once again.

Before leaving for Thailand I had fretted about not being able to so much as outline the program. I often sat before the computer with the blank screen staring back at me, but nothing came. So I boarded the flight to Thailand with notes from here and there and the anxious feeling that I was unprepared. Even as the program got under way I found I could prepare for one day ahead, but no further. I had told the group that we were engaged in an organic enterprise and that this project had to be grounded in and grow out of their experience. I had urged that we be contemplative toward that experience as it manifested itself. But I had not trusted that process for my part of the endeavor, the input and facilitation for each day. Once I became conscious of that dynamic and surrendered to the process itself, the subject matter unfolded day by day, and the dialogue took on its own energy. Once again, a group of budding spiritual directors came alive before my eyes.

"And God said, 'Behold I am doing a new thing. Do you not see it?'" (Is. 43:19).

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A Template for Formation Programs

Ronald D. Witherup, S.S.

In January 2003, the Conference of the Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) sponsored a workshop on formation in religious houses for provincials, other leaders and formation staff. It was held at Marywood Retreat Center in the Diocese of St. Augustine. The workshop included presentations by the following: Dr. Dean R. Hoge on implications of his *The First Five Years of Priesthood* (Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 2002) for religious, and the sociological dimensions of formation; Canice Connors, O.F.M. Conv., and Donna Markham, O.P., on psychological factors in screening and formation; Paul Philibert, O.P., on theological and anthropological considerations for formation; Ted Keating, S.M., on CMSM Formation Committee issues; and Ronald Witherup, S.S., on biblical foundations for a spirituality of celibacy.

At the conclusion of the workshop, which was a resounding success, I reviewed with the seventy-five participants from around the United States twenty-five questions (the figure is arbitrary) that should be asked when they examine their formation programs. While the list is not intended to be exhaustive, it does provide a kind of checklist or inventory of major considerations that should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the highest quality of formation in religious institutes, whether for priests, brothers or sis-

ters, is occurring. Such a list could surely be applied to all religious formation programs, with some adaptation.

TOWARD A TEMPLATE FOR FORMATION

At the end of the workshop, our goal was primarily to ask participants to reflect on the presentations they had heard with the following main question in mind: What should an effective formation program look like? That is, what essentials should be incorporated into our formation programs in order to ensure their quality and efficacy? The following list is intended only as a suggestive template. It is not necessarily in order of priority. Readers should also note that the list is primarily directed toward the formation of religious priests, but it is by-and-large applicable to religious brothers and sisters, as well. Each question will be accompanied by comments that offer explanation or expansion.

- 1) Are admission standards clearly enunciated and observed for your formation program? Comment: It is much easier to be strict at the front door than to dismiss a problem candidate in formation later. Do not skim on admission standards. Do not too freely give leeway for growth in a candidate with serious deficits,

Given the extent of the sexual abuse crisis among clergy, one area in need of reevaluation is formation in sexuality and celibacy

especially if they are over age thirty.

- 2) Does the program attend to all dimensions of formation, i.e., human, spiritual, academic and pastoral? Comment: *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1993), the important apostolic exhortation of John Paul II issued after the 1991 Synod of Bishops on priestly formation, notes these formation categories explicitly. Indeed, it is essential to note the order. Human formation must be attended to first. If candidates, postulants or novices do not have the basic skills of human communication and interaction, the other categories of formation cannot be effectively addressed. Spirituality, academics or pastoral issues can easily preoccupy someone in formation and distract from crucial deficits in the area of human formation. On the other hand, one should note that all ministerial formation should have a pastoral dimension that helps to promote integration. Academics or spirituality, apart from a pastoral perspective, will not in themselves lead to healthy ministry.
- 3) In the area of human formation, does the program include an evaluation of a candidate's ability to live in community? Comment: This should be obvious, but it deserves some special attention because of the nature of most religious communities. Any community can tolerate only so many dysfunctional or difficult individuals within its boundaries. It is no secret that religious life, at times, can attract those who have not been successful in other arenas of life and use their religious attractions as a kind of refuge. Formation programs need to be especially sensitive to the quality of community life experienced when new members in formation are present. For instance, if tensions suddenly

arise and an individual in formation is the source of much friction and a cause of division in community, you may be dealing with a borderline personality who has no ability to live in community in a healthy fashion. Furthermore, one should watch out for signs of unhealthy anger in candidates or an inability to relate properly with authorities. These can be signs of more deep-seated problems. A shortage of vocations should never tempt a community to accept members who are not suited for community life. Correspondingly, formation programs should carefully discern whether those in formation are suited for acceptance in the group. Finally, one should note that there is a proper role for psychological counseling when needed, provided that the formation house does not become virtually a therapeutic community. Professional counseling can be a good catalyst for personal growth.

- 4) Does the program have an extensive, developmental program in celibacy formation? Comment: Given the extent of the sexual abuse crisis among clergy, one area in need of reevaluation is formation in sexuality and celibacy. Although most seminary and formation programs have evolved extensive programs in this area in the last twenty years or so, we should recognize that more needs to be done. Do programs insist, for instance, on some evidence of a track record in living celibately before admission? Are candidates secure in their own sexual identity when admitted? Is celibacy spoken of at length and with confidence? Is celibacy approached not only from a psychological angle but also from a theological and spiritual perspective? These and other questions are highly pertinent to contemporary programs of formation.
- 5) In the area of spiritual formation, do candidates in formation receive regular spiritual direction from qualified spiritual directors? Are they held accountable for regular spiritual direction and for receiving the sacraments? Comment: This point should seem obvious in religious formation, but there is evidence to suggest that spiritual discipline, especially with the sacrament of reconciliation, has sometimes become lax among priests and religious. Caution should be exercised, too, when using outside spiritual directors. They should be expertly trained, and their approach to formation should be in synch with that of the formation program, so as not to

cause conflicts. Formation programs should help inculcate good “habits of the heart” in those they form. In addition, attention should be paid to the formative aspects of liturgy in seminaries or houses of formation. A good liturgical life is essential to the community and powerfully impacts the quality of spiritual formation.

- 6) With regard to academic formation, does the program (wherever it is conducted, e.g., at one of the theological unions) contain all the elements for religious formation, and is there room for adequate taking of elective courses? Comment: There are so many prerequisites in formation, especially priestly formation, that it may be easy to overlook the need for some flexibility in the academic lineup. Academic programs should contain all the essentials for theological formation while allowing for some flexibility in personal interests.
- 7) Do academic programs attend properly to the magisterium of the church? Comment: Those in formation are not necessarily familiar with the church’s official teachings. In fact, they often enter with preconceived ideas that are not necessarily accurate. Academic programs should foster great familiarity with the major teachings of the church and foster knowledge of important official documents.
- 8) With regard to pastoral formation, is proper supervision provided in pastoral placements and a regular evaluation of performance, both orally and in writing? Comment: Pastoral ministry often is a source of great satisfaction for those in formation, precisely because they feel accepted and needed in such settings. There can be no substitute for highly trained supervisors in pastoral settings and for honest feedback to be given to those in formation about their skills and needed areas of improvement.
- 9) What elements of instruction are included in formation for the congregation’s unique history, mission, spirituality and ethos, and how do these interrelate with the other elements of formation? Comment: One of the great effects of Vatican Council II was to give impetus to each religious community to rediscover its original charism and examine itself about how it wished to live out this charism in the contemporary world. Most academic programs, whether in a freestanding seminary or in a theological union, do not include special instruction in the unique characteristics of each community. Each institute must incorporate such instruction in its own formation program. But how well does this

One of the great effects of Vatican Council II was to give impetus to each religious community to rediscover its original charism

instruction, assuming it exists, relate to the rest of formation? Is attention given to religious life in general, as well as to the community’s unique mission and identity? Formation needs to attend to both.

- 10) Does the program foster integration of all formational elements? Comment: It is one thing to provide all the elements for formation; it is another to ensure that they operate collectively and integrally to form a religious who is well suited for religious life. Too often, people compartmentalize aspects of their lives. This appears to be the case with many priest sexual abusers. Integration is one of the more elusive but necessary aspects of any formation program, and it requires constant attention and reevaluation.
- 11) Is there sufficient attention paid to developmental stages in formation? Comment: Formation programs should recognize the existence of different stages of development in formation and express expectations at different levels clearly. Those in the initial formation of postulancy should have realistic expectations placed upon them that coincide with their new status. Likewise, those in novitiate should have appropriate expectations for them, and those in a first assignment as well. Not everyone is at the same level of formation, although some programs or courses may be taken together for practical reasons. Most important is that formators express these expectations clearly and acknowledge the different stages of development pertinent to those in formation.
- 12) Is there adequate protection of both internal and external forums in the formation program? Comment: Internal forum issues apply specifi-

cally to spiritual direction and the sacrament of reconciliation. External forum issues apply to one's advisor, mentor or supervisor in which reports of progress or failures properly are passed on to higher authorities, e.g., the provincial or provincial council. It is a mistake to rely wholly on the internal forum to attend to such sensitive and critical issues as human growth or psychosexual development. On the other hand, both forums could address such issues in respective ways that might reinforce one another.

- 13) Is the formation program concretely behavioral?

Comment: Evaluations of those in formation cannot be done properly on the basis of feeling or attitude, although it can be true that a formator's "gut feeling" about someone may be right on target. In order to provide fairness and objectivity, behaviors are what should be the primary focus of formation programs. Those in formation cannot dodge accurate comments about behaviors.

- 14) Is there emphasis on building trust in the program?

Comment: Trust is an essential human quality, but in formation programs it is a *sine qua non*. If those in formation do not trust their formators, or those in authority do not trust them to be doing their job, then the program will falter at various levels. Trust is not easy to build in an evaluative setting, but it not impossible. Promoting honest communication is essential. Being strictly fair and objective and avoiding, at all costs, playing favorites, is crucial.

- 15) Does formation occur both individually and in groups?

Comment: Formation is a complex reality, one that requires a balance of multiple values. Although every candidate, postulant or novice should be encouraged to embrace his or her own formation program and take some responsibility for it, group formation can also be instrumental in shaping all participants' attitudes. Group formation also offers occasions for healthy, adult sharing that can promote growth.

- 16) Does the formation team function collaboratively?

Comment: Indeed, a prior question could be, is there a formation team? Formation can be done one-on-one, but it is more effective in a team. Collaborative formation can also model good collaborative ministry, as well as good community. If the formators are in disarray, it can invite disruption in the program and lead to divisions. Religious life usually includes a call to community life; "Lone Rangers" and *prima don-*

nas can be disruptive at best, or divisive, marginal personalities at worst. A team approach to formation can also take the pressure off the formation director with regard to a final decision about acceptance or rejection of candidates in formation.

- 17) Is there sufficient accountability in the formation program?

Comment: It should be self-evident that those in formation must be held accountable for their actions, their program, their progress, etc. Another level of accountability, however, should not be overlooked. Formation directors themselves (or teams) should also be held accountable. They should be supervised, at least on occasion, by properly trained professionals. They should also be given access to workshops and seminars on formation and should be encouraged to hone their skills continually. Provincials and those in leadership should also regularly affirm their formators, listen to their concerns and accept their recommendations. (If their recommendations appear biased or are not to be trusted, then one could ask why leaders have placed them in formation.) Rectors, directors or superiors also play an important role in supporting the entire formation program, especially by assuring its coherence and fostering a unified vision.

- 18) Is the pace of formation proper to each one in formation?

Comment: In a desire to improve the quality of or to professionalize formation programs, one could forget that the pace, length and balance in formation programs may need some adjustment according to the level of ability of each person in formation. Some may require longer academic programs (perhaps because of limitations in the English language). Others may need more time in spiritual discernment. Still others may need to leave formation for an extended period to attend to certain human formation or personal growth issues that should be resolved before final vows or ordination. Such flexibility can wreak havoc, especially on academic programs, but we should have the interests of the individuals in formation at heart and adjust the pace accordingly. (This should not apply, of course, to those who are judged to be so deficient that they can never measure up to the standards of religious life.)

- 19) Is there a basic conformity between the life of the formation community and the life of the community itself?

Comment: It can be very jarring for both individuals and the community if

the ideals taught and experienced in formation are not lived out in the religious community itself. If the formation program is experienced as quite different from the lived reality of the members of the religious community, unreal expectations can result in truly dysfunctional behaviors. Those in formation should have their fingers on the pulse of the community's life. Those in community should extend themselves to welcome those in formation and help instruct them on the community's expectations. In essence, it would be most helpful if each member of the community saw himself or herself as an extension of the formator's work, assisting with the incorporation of new members for the common good.

- 20) Is the formation program attentive to multiculturalism, both in the church and in the religious community itself? Comment: One of the most obvious realities in religious life and in the church today is that it is multicultural. Many religious communities have several nationalities represented in their formation programs and in their communities. Even if that were not the case, no religious today can expect to live in a mono-cultural setting. Immigration patterns and the ease of travel have made the United States, in particular, and the world, in general, truly multicultural. While there are no set guidelines that can be issued to address this reality, all formation programs should reexamine their sensitivity to this multicultural setting. If those in formation include different nationalities (e.g., Pacific-Asians, Latinos, Africans, etc.), strong consideration should be given to involving formators from those cultures as directors of or mentors in formation. Leaders should also be on the lookout for signs of racism or reverse racism. Consulting experts from these diverse cultures can also help avoid formation pitfalls such as assuming that certain inappropriate or unacceptable behaviors are due to cultural differences, rather than basic human deficits. This is a tricky area in which one must consult a number of experts.
- 21) Is the quality of mentoring adequate for the formation program? Comment: Anyone in formation knows that good mentoring is a key to success. Mentors must be well trained and adaptable. They also need to be savvy about the human condition and be willing to tell the truth, even if it means upsetting those in formation or the superiors. There should be some attention given to a mentoring program or participation

in workshops on mentoring. Also, some attention should be given to age-appropriate mentoring. Although it is common for older and more experienced members of the community to be assigned as mentors for those in formation, if they are unable to identify with those in their charge, it can lead to conflict and misunderstanding.

- 22) Does the program include training in professional boundaries? Comment: One lesson from the recent sexual abuse crisis among Roman Catholic clergy is that there appears to be a basic lack of observance of professional ethical boundaries in ministerial relationships. This may strike some as absurd. Priests are priests, religious are religious; they should know about ethics. One cannot assume this. In fact, Roman Catholic clergy, in general, do not have benefit of the decades of Protestant research on the topic of professional ethics for clergy, including the importance of the disparity of power between those who minister and those who seek ministerial care. All formation programs need some input in professional ethics and maintenance of boundaries.
- 23) Is the formation program attentive to the need for ongoing formation? Comment: Attitudinally, every initial formation program should inculcate in its participants, right from the beginning, an attitude of the necessity of ongoing formation. Formation does not end with the profession of final vows or ordination. Formation should take place throughout one's life. Openness to learning and a willingness to adapt are critical skills needed for religious ministry in a world that changes as rapidly as ours does. The U.S. bishops, for instance, have issued a fine document for priests called *The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests* (Washington, D.C.: NCCB, 2001), which acknowledges the need for attention to formation at every stage of a priest's life. It provides an exemplary model to consider for religious formation. As a former seminary professor, however, I can attest to the challenge of imparting this attitude to those in formation. Those in formation usually can't wait to get out of it. Nothing could be further from the truth. Learning is, and should be, a lifelong experience, especially for anyone who wishes to call himself a religious.
- 24) Does the formation program include an annual evaluation? Comment: I recommend an annual evaluation that addresses two essential questions: What works and what doesn't work in

your formation program? Participants, as well as the director and the team, should be involved in this regular evaluation. It is also helpful to involve the provincial and/or general and other leaders in this process. In certain instances it may be helpful to ask the general membership of the community for advice and recommendation on formation issues.

- 25) Does the literature of the formation program conform to the reality? Comment: First, I assume that every formation program has some sort of literature that describes its purpose, methods, etc., and is up-to-date. If that is not the case, then attention must be given to designing literature (handbooks, brochures, guidelines, expectations, etc.) that describes the formation program in its entirety. Those in formation (as well as those in charge of it) have a right to know what is expected of them and where their formation will lead them. The next question, however, is how well this descriptive literature conforms to the reality. In this age of accountability, it is essential that the description of one's program conform to the reality. It can have even legal consequences, should someone in formation get into serious legal trouble.

This list, which I am proposing as a kind of template for religious formation, can easily apply to the formation of both priests and brothers in religious communities, and even to religious sisters. Obviously, there needs to be room for flexibility in the adaptation of these guidelines to individual settings of formation. In this day and age, I believe that two points should be emphasized to round out this topic. Smaller communities could rightly ask themselves: How can we accomplish such an extensive formation program, given our limited resources and limited numbers of applicants?

My response is: The future of formation for religious communities may well lie in cross-institute houses of formation. We should avoid duplicating efforts in this age of downsizing. Many elements of formation (excluding those related specifically to an institute's history, mission, spirituality or ethos) are equally applicable across the board to religious communities. Some such inter-community formation programs already exist. More will likely be necessary to meet the needs of the future.

A second point pertains to the need for excellent formation programs in the wake of the sexual abuse crisis that hit the church in the United States in 2002.

An announced apostolic visitation of seminaries and religious houses of formation is one avenue proposed by the cardinals of the United States when they met with officials of the Holy See to explore the causes and the ways to address the abuse crisis that has hit our church. We have nothing to fear from this visitation. We have undergone apostolic visitations in the past and, doubtless, we will undergo them in the future. I emphasize, however, something that has been largely missing from the media's assessment of the current crisis. Media reports seem to imply that the crisis has been due in large measure to the church's current structures of formation. In doing so, they also attack such institutions as mandatory celibacy and seminary formation.

In my experience, tremendous progress has been made in seminary formation since the 1970s, and current formation practices are not highly problematic. Although one cannot know what we will undergo ten or fifteen years hence, I do not believe we will discover that there was a whole host of improperly formed predators in the ranks of the clergy or religious life trained in recent years. While I cannot assert definitively what the causes of the current crisis are, I can affirm that the quality of formation in freestanding seminaries and houses of formation is far better today than it was a generation ago. For instance, seminary faculties and religious houses responded to the need for professional and thorough psychological examinations of candidates for admission decades ago, in recognition of the need to weed out unstable and dysfunctional applicants. On the other hand, there is continual need to improve our screening processes and our programs for formation. It is of concern to note that the Hoge study of priests ordained one to five years points out that more religious priests fault their formation in the area of sexuality and celibacy than do diocesan priests. All the more reason that we should be attentive to how we propose to do formation in our religious communities in the future.



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Pathways Toward the Future

Rita Parks, R.S.M.

We are Sisters of Mercy.

We gather this day,
Knowing that our bonds are rooted in God,
And that we strengthen and enable one another
for mission. . .

We, women of Mercy,
Have discovered a new relationship among us,
And we pray that the bonds we formalize today
Will endure,
Will enliven us,
And will serve our church and touch our world. . .
In witness whereunto we sign our names . . .

In virtue of membership each sister assumes
the responsibility to participate in the decision
making processes of the Institute. . .

The structure of planning is intended to put into
motion the activities and forms necessary to
give energy to a new reality. . . The visible body
of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the
Americas will have a new face.

These words are excerpts from the Founding Document (July 20, 1991), the Constitutions (December 12, 1991) and the Planning for the Future Proposal (adopted November 1996) of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

These signposts on the pathways of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas mark a journey begun ten years prior to the founding of the Institute in July 1991, a new threshold crossed in June 1999, and a fresh chance to walk the talk today.

In July 1991, sixteen independent congregations of the Sisters of Mercy and the nine provinces of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union joined to form a new entity: the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. Preceded by a process both painstaking and sometimes pain-filled, this undertaking was described as a "fascinating story of planned change on a large scale" by Catherine C. Darcy, R.S.M., in *The Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas: The Canonical Development of the Proposed Governance Model*, published by University Press of America in 1993. The process engaged both leadership and membership over a period of ten years. Rather than designing a merger of the participating congregations, the goal was no less than the creation of a new reality, a new Institute. This goal was formalized at the first Chapter

in 1991. In addition, the participants elected leadership and created a Direction Statement for the Institute based upon the Constitutions approved during the Chapter to guide the new entity.

The wedding was over; now the marriage began. While the twenty-five regional communities shared a common founder, each brought to the table a unique package of history, locale, custom and culture. After the exhilaration of the founding event, the strongest push for becoming a single Institute remained their common mission, coupled with a solid determination to make it work.

During the next half-decade, the leadership of the regional communities continued the slow and careful work of letting go and building anew a shared perspective on governance, incorporation, finances and a variety of policies and practices that heretofore were the provenance of each entity in its own milieu. At the same time, the networking of members across regional community lines, which had stimulated interest in a single Institute many years before, deepened relationships throughout the twelve countries of the Institute.

Shortly after the second Institute Chapter, in 1995, the Institute leadership team proposed, and the twenty-five regional community presidents accepted, a plan for next steps in living into the reality of a new congregation. With increasing clarity, leadership saw the need to take stock of both the assets and the liabilities of the new entity and to identify stumbling blocks and maximize the energy and the potential for mission. As described in the promotional brochure distributed at that time to the nearly 8,000 members and associates, the Pathways Toward the Future planning process would invite broad participation in focusing resources, unleashing new energy and strengthening the bonds forged in 1991.

The description of the Pathways project as a work in progress could not have been more prophetic. From the beginning, the Pathways committee exercised internal flexibility to form and re-form their own thinking and style of communicating and to redesign planning materials and methods, as well as to adjust the time line. A few early rumors arose that the planners had already determined the outcome and were simply leading the Institute down that path. However, by the time for direction-setting at the third Institute Chapter in 1999, it was clear that anyone who chose to take the opportunity could play a considerable role in creating the content for decisions.

The conceptual model for the two-year life of the project described both personnel and events. Personnel included three groups: the Pathways com-

mittee responsible for guiding the process and accountable to the Institute membership; twenty-five "Links," or contact persons in the twenty-five regional communities; and fifteen coordinators of Resource Groups representing key entities or ministries in the Institute. External consultants brought their skill to specific aspects, and ad hoc groups were formed as needed, for example, to analyze and synthesize, to provide additional data, to create future scenarios, etc.

Events included individual surveys and response to developing materials, conference calls with Chapter delegates, two cross-regional and several intra-regional consultations and two gatherings of the personnel groups in an integration network session, one of which was conducted through videoconferencing.

Once the planning design was created, the planning process moved through six phases, beginning with data gathering and including analysis, consultation, communication, visioning, focusing and decision-making.

PHASE I: INITIATING THE DIALOGUE

This first phase, from January to May 1997, provided an introduction to the project through cross-regional gatherings in all countries of the Institute. Members and associates, whose lives had not yet been significantly changed by the creation of the Institute, were invited to enter into the process to the degree and the depth that their interest and energy would allow. This was followed by a personal invitation sent to each member and associate to participate in a Resource Group or to offer support in other ways.

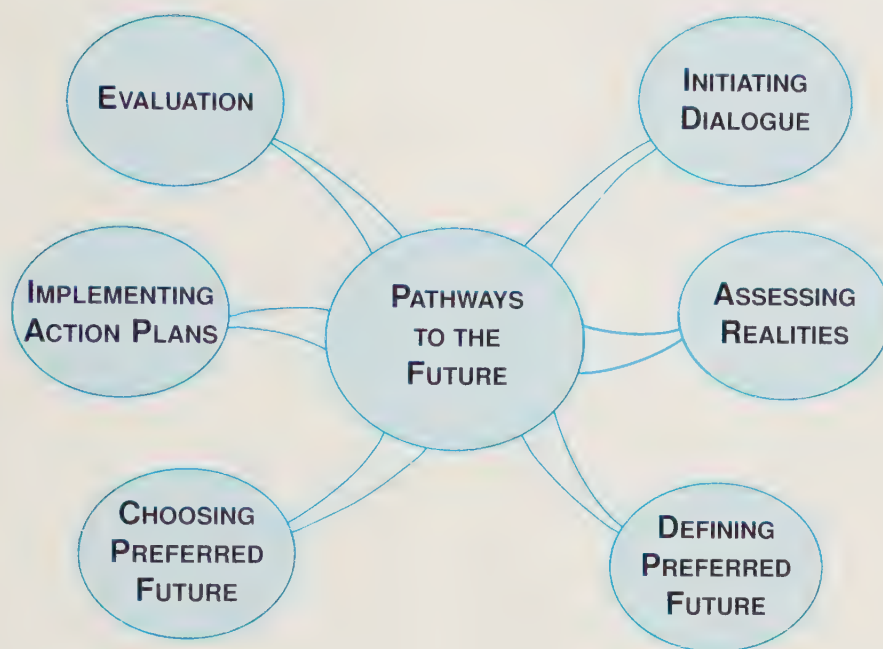
Workshops for the regional community Links and Resource Group Coordinators resulted in adjustments in the process (more examples and how-to instructions), communication (clarity on who needs to know what and when) and time line (too short to meet varied regional community schedules).

It was also at this time that the Pathways committee, all of whom were engaged in full-time ministry, identified a full-time coordinator to oversee the Pathways process and the 1999 Chapter, as well as to serve as a contact with Links and Resource Group Coordinators.

Prior to moving into the next phase, the Pathways committee addressed a number of questions that would recur throughout the project. These included how to engage the membership and maintain energy and focus? How to push limits without moving

Time Line & Sequence for Change Process

January 1997 and Beyond



beyond what can be tolerated? How to keep the connections and the communication flowing among the various groups? What models will help to generate alternative futures? What are the gaps in the process? What groups need particular attention? What issues arising out of the Pathways process have implications for governance, authority and restructuring? How can we balance entering the process where we presently stand and yet be open to moving to another place? Is there readiness for something new and in what areas? How can divergent views be respected without polarizing? How can we plan for both affective and cognitive approaches to planning? What, if any, are parameters and nonnegotiables? What is dying; what is coming to birth? What risks will we take? What do we question; what do we affirm?

PHASE II: ASSESSING CURRENT REALITIES

This second phase, from June to December 1997, brought members and associates another invitation to participate, this time in the form of a survey designed by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). The CARA survey was developed with several goals in mind: to give each member and

associate a voice in the process; to determine how the 1991 Direction Statement was being realized in the Institute and in regional communities; to assess readiness for change; to identify what creates or dissipates energy, and to test assumptions about individual values, beliefs and attitudes. While providing for anonymity of the respondent, the survey allowed for breakdown of data by each regional community. A high rate of return indicated that a significant number of members as well as some associates were at best committed to or at least interested in or curious about the project.

This phase included the collection of current demographic and ministry data, as well as information on the external environment, societal trends and profiles of the twelve Institute countries. In seeking to round out regional community data, the Pathways committee attempted to avoid requesting information already provided to the Institute.

Toward the end of this phase, the committee engaged three members and one associate who applied their professional expertise to the task of synthesizing the work to date. The resulting report was presented to a gathering of approximately seventy Links, Resource Group Coordinators and guests —

Spirited conversations on the possible futures helped to envision how each scenario might focus Institute life by clarifying the costs and benefits

the first of two major integration network meetings of the key groups moving the process from the beginning. The participants in this gathering provided critical and reflective response to the synthesis report, as well as crucial feedback to the Pathways committee to adjust the process for the next phase.

PHASE III: DEFINING OUR PREFERRED FUTURE

The third phase, which occurred from January to August 1998, moved the project into a broad-based consultation with members and associates, each of whom received a copy of the synthesis report. The report served as a touchstone for asking: "What aspects of our Institute do we need to strengthen, change or create; and what do we need to do to make this happen?"

Rather than scheduling specific meetings to address this question, the committee asked each regional community Link and Resource Group Coordinator to make use of already established structures and scheduled gatherings in the next several months. These became opportunities for members and associates who, having reflected on their personal attitudes and values during the CARA survey, as well as having considered the present Institute reality as described in the synthesis report, could then begin to identify intuitions, dreams, ideas and even specific strategies for bringing new energy and depth to living out the 1991 Direction Statement.

Based upon the responses to the question, the committee asked four members to create four possible preferred futures — each scenario presenting a different energy focus for the life and mission of the Institute. Every scenario also included the common elements of ministry, community, structure and relationships illustrated by the behaviors and values

inherent in each approach.

Creating contrasting futures for conversation could present choices leading to possible content themes for the third Institute Chapter in 1999. During this same time period, plans for the Chapter began to take shape, most visibly in the nomination process for congregation leadership for an Institute already engaged in considering anew what the future might hold.

PHASE IV: CHOOSING OUR PREFERRED FUTURE

The fourth phase, from September 1998 to June 1999, flowed from the presentation of the four scenarios to the Institute members and associates in the context of a theological reflection process. Again, the committee asked each regional community Link to arrange for considering the scenarios in the context of already scheduled events or group gatherings in her community. In addition, members and associates were encouraged to introduce the conversation into a variety of both formal and informal settings with co-workers, colleagues and others with whom and for whom they served.

While no single scenario gained overwhelming support, spirited conversations on the possible futures helped to envision how each scenario might focus Institute life by clarifying the costs and benefits of the choices. Feedback on these conversations provided the content for the second integration network gathering of regional community Links and Resource Group Coordinators, this time through a videoconference among those who had participated in the first integration network gathering almost a year earlier. In turn, the Pathways committee distilled from this virtual meeting several recurring themes that became seeds of content for the 1999 Chapter. These themes were also presented at a second round of cross-regional meetings at which members and associates were invited to offer their best wisdom on what actions could take the 1991 Direction Statement to a new stage of commitment, energy and creativity.

By the beginning of 1999, other structural and organizational issues began to emerge, as well. These included questions about whether the Institute or the regional communities held responsibility and sponsorship for vocation and incorporation work and certain shared ministries. In addition, both leadership and some members were raising issues of reorganization of regional communities and sharing of finances. The questions were apparent in meetings of the Institute leadership conference, in collaborative work among regional community presidents, in the work of committees and other groups and in conversations

among members and associates. The original and current structures and approaches were no longer serving the new Institute well. This deepening and heightened awareness of the need for change not only provided opportunity for further integration of already developing Chapter content, but also presented another threshold for the Institute to cross in its pathway toward the future.

While the Institute at large worked through each phase, the Pathways committee was living in the next phase, creating or adjusting the materials and time line in anticipation of and in response to feedback. Timing was of the essence in order to complete the process by the June 1999 Chapter, yet time was always in short supply.

In the busy months preceding the Chapter, the emerging Chapter content was sent to members and associates. Additionally, conference calls with groups of Chapter delegates and alternates served to sample delegate views and identify other issues that might need attention at the Chapter. Unfortunately, participation by international delegates and alternates in these calls was extremely limited because of the language barrier and, in some instances, the issue of time zones or nonavailability of participants to join any of the several calls scheduled. Individual calls were made to these delegates and alternates to solicit their views, but they were not able to engage as part of a larger cluster.

The final step in this phase was taken during the Institute Chapter session of June 1999. Witnessed by a record-breaking turnout of participants, the delegates hammered out the outline of an Action Plan that addressed five key and interrelated issues aimed at taking the Direction Statement to its next level. The Action Plan became the blueprint for implementing the Chapter decisions in the arenas of the individual, the regional community and the Institute as a whole.

PHASE V: IMPLEMENTING WITH ACCOUNTABILITY

Phase V, which began in July 1999, commenced with intensive planning initiated by the new Institute leadership team in conjunction with the leadership conference of the twenty-five presidents of the regional communities. Their continuing, consistent and collaborative work has played a significant role in bringing the Action Plan to life in the regional communities and inventing creative ways to shape it to the unique reality of each community. This will continue at least through the next Institute Chapter in 2005.

Individuals recounted their experience of the Action Plan unfolding in their regional community

PHASE VI: EVALUATING OUR EFFORTS

Phase VI began in July 2001, also, and provided an opportunity after two years of implementation efforts to pause for a moment, significantly at the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Institute, to take stock of how and to what extent the Action Plan has permeated the life of individuals, regional communities and the Institute as a whole.

Rather than designing an evaluation tool to assess the state of development, the Institute leadership team suggested that the accountability for implementation take on the aspect of an accounting or recounting of the many stories of the Action Plan's development in the life of each regional community. During Institute Week, July 20-27, 2001, the Institute website became a virtual book both written and read across the twelve countries. Individuals recounted their experience of the Action Plan unfolding in their regional community, and others responded with encouragement and congratulations while they added their own stories. Again, this mutual exchange and enrichment will continue as each group continues to work with the Plan.

Learnings from the Pathways project continue to unfold beyond the life of the two-year project that produced the Action Plan. The learnings from the Pathways experience could be grouped into three categories: concept, content and communication. While the planners believed they had achieved measurable success in some aspects of these categories, they also knew that they would approach some tasks differently were they to do it again.

Learnings from the Pathways project continue to unfold beyond the life of the two-year project that produced the Action Plan

Concept: The Pathways concept laid out a plan that invited broad participation, offered flexibility and drew upon both internal and external expertise. Whether out of enthusiasm or obligation, hundreds of members and many associates responded, requiring management of materials in massive proportions. While the basic concept of the plan remained stable, the planners constantly fine-tuned and shifted approaches in order to respond with flexibility. Learnings about the concept included:

- Invite rather than obligate members who have the skills and energy to participate; do not expect those unable or unwilling to come along. Care for those who cannot move, but do not allow resistance to stall or stop movement forward.
- Be ready to change, change and change again as the reality unfolds. Flexibility and responsiveness engender trust that all voices and perspectives can be heard and that plans will be revised accordingly.
- Use the skills of members who know the reality from the inside and supplement with the objective eyes of external experts. Test each step by inviting random feedback and paying attention to it.

Content: The Pathways content tapped into several aspects of the life and ministry of members. While some respondents saw this approach as overwhelming, others pointed out areas of omission or inadequate coverage. The planners worked to identify core issues and values in order to integrate the material in preparation for Chapter decision-making. Learnings about the content included:

- Establish a climate of openness to all ideas. Give attention to those on the edges of new horizons, the poets and the prophets, as well as to those

in the mainstream. Welcome creativity and surprises.

- Push the envelope of “what if” while carefully assessing how much innovation members can tolerate.
- Continually link emerging content with the Gospel and with the congregation’s tradition and core documents.

Communication: Who needs to know what, when do they need to know it, and how does the interaction happen? These questions are arguably the most essential and yet the most difficult to gauge in the process. Brevity, clarity and consistent terminology were key communication rules for the planning committee. The realities of international communication with members — access, time lag, culture and language differences — provided challenges throughout the process. Learnings about communication included:

- Deliver core messages — particularly goals and rationale — in a format, style and with visual elements that are recognizable and familiar. Repeat the story at each new phase through personal contact and a variety of media.
- Attend to the training of trainers who are crucial in taking the message beyond the planners. Provide these key gatekeepers with what they need to convey the message clearly, consistently and with confidence.
- Listen, learn and commit to a mutual translation of culture — a challenge infinitely more complex than the translation of language. Anticipate international requirements and time lines in order to minimize inevitable contact problems.

The conclusion of this journey begun by the Pathways project is not in sight, any more than the evolutionary process of any living organism can come to a conclusion or even be envisioned. The project itself is completed, and the 1999 Chapter Action Plan is firmly established on the agendas of both leadership and membership. The content areas to be addressed in the Plan — economically poor people, many cultures, creation, one another and women and the church — have become touchstones for the creativity of both individuals and regional communities. And at this time, leadership and membership are taking the next step — a re-imagining of Institute structures and relationships in order to better facilitate the mission in these key areas of the Action Plan.

The analogy of a marriage might continue to be appropriate for this endeavor. The promise, the commitment was made in 1991; the partners continue to

grow in their understanding of that commitment even as they change with new circumstances. Some decisions that appeared difficult at that time are now taken for granted; others that were deceptively simple at the outset are now presenting formidable challenges in terms of personal and communal conversion. The endeavor, however challenging, continues to be well worth the price.



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Positive Attitudes Toward Aging May Prolong Life

People over age 60 often experience negative stereotypes in their interactions with others. In a study of eighty-four people over 60 (*The Gerontologist*, Vol. 41, No. 5) nearly 80 percent reported experiencing such stereotyping. Fifty-eight percent of them had been told jokes that poked fun at older people, and 31 percent reported being ignored or not taken seriously because of their age. Such stereotypes may have negative effects on the self-image of older people with a consequent shortening of their lives. At least this is one conclusion drawn from a longitudinal study of 660 people 50 years and older by its author, Becca Levy, Ph.D., of Yale University, reporting in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Vol. 83, No. 2).

Those with a more positive attitude toward aging lived 7.5 years longer than those with more negative self-images of aging. In addition, older adults who were exposed to positive images of aging by the researcher had significantly better memory and balance afterward, while those

exposed to negative images had worse memory and balance. Levy says, as reported in *Monitor in Psychology* (May, 2003, p. 51), that stereotypes about age seem to be internalized at an early age, even by the age of 4, "long before they are even relevant to people."

Television portrayal of the elderly may also fuel stereotypes. In the same article in *Monitor in Psychology*, Doris Roberts, the over-70, Emmy-award-winning actress in "Everybody Loves Raymond," is quoted at a Senate hearing: "My peers and I are portrayed as dependent, helpless, unproductive and demanding rather than deserving. In reality, the majority of seniors are self-sufficient, middle class consumers with more assets than most young people, and the time and talent to offer society."

All of us need to examine our attitudes toward aging. The only alternative to aging is an early death. So most of us are headed inevitably toward old age.

A Primer on Sex and Sexuality

Len Sperry, M.D., Ph.D.

Pedophilia, ephebophilia, gender identity, psychosexual development, paraphilias. While these terms are fairly commonplace in the news media, there is relatively little shared understanding of the meaning of these and similar terms. It is ironic that for years sexuality was scarcely discussed openly in Christian circles, and now there seem to be few other topics that are more widely discussed or have more urgency.

Unfortunately, such discussions may be less informed, or at least less focused, than they might otherwise be because of this lack of a commonly shared knowledge base. What is needed is a primer — a concise and easily accessible account of key terms and concepts — on sex and sexuality. While this article does not pretend to be the definitive primer on such terms, it does attempt to offer a brief and bias-free set of definitions and descriptions of key concepts. Hopefully, such a primer can provide formation personnel and other church leaders a common language for understanding and analyzing the pressing sexual issues they face today.

Approximately fifty commonly used terms and concepts are briefly defined and described or illustrated. These terms have been catalogued in five main categories: sex and sexuality, sexual and gender development, sexual and gender orientations, sexual difficulties and disorders, and intimacy and sexuality.

SEX AND SEXUALITY

Sex: The term sex has two common designations. The first refers to the biological aspect of one's personhood, i.e., who we are. It is the individual's biological status based on the appearance of genitals — male or female. Sex also refers to genital behavior, i.e., what we do. This includes arousal and activities associated with sexual feelings, fantasies, masturbation, foreplay or intercourse for the purpose of pleasure and/or reproduction.

Sexuality encompasses both sex, i.e., who we are and what we think, feel and do sexually, as well as the meanings given to sex. According to Evelyn and James Whitehead, sexuality is, "What our body means to us, how we understand ourself as a woman or as a man, the way we feel comfortable in expressing affection — these are part of our sexuality...In this broadest sense, sexuality is how we make sex significant." Sexuality often involves physical indications of caring and concern such as touching with or without genital expression or related sexual activities or practices.

Sexual Practices: This term refers to a variety of sexual activities, including penile-vaginal sex, fore-

play, masturbation, anal sex or oral sex that may or may not lead to orgasm.

Orgasm refers to the brief, intense sensations in the genitals — which can spread throughout the body — experienced during the peak or climax of sexual arousal and response. It is characterized by a series of highly pleasurable contractions of pelvic muscles accompanying the discharge of sexual tension. It can also include ejaculation in males.

Sexual Health refers to attitudes, behaviors and relationships about sexuality. It also refers to the absence of sexually transmitted diseases. Sexually healthy persons are individuals who view sexuality in positive terms, are comfortable with their own sexuality and can relate to others in a sexually and emotionally responsible manner while maintaining appropriate boundaries. Sexually healthy persons develop within sexually healthy families.

Sexually Healthy Family: Sexually healthy families are families where both personal identities and the integrity of the family system are maintained and boundaries are respected between the sexes. Such families hold developmentally appropriate values for sexuality, and family members experience positive forms of touch and physical interaction without emotional or physical invasiveness.

SEXUAL AND GENDER DEVELOPMENT

Psychosexual refers to the emotional and/or cognitive aspects of sexuality.

Psychosexual Development is an often used but elusive term for which there is little, if any, consensus as to its meaning and method of assessment. Today, because of the multiple connotations and imprecision associated with the term psychosexual development, sexual researchers are increasingly focusing on the narrower concept of gender identity and its development. Nevertheless, because the psychoanalytic model of psychosexual development is still alluded to in religious circles today, it will be briefly described, and two other lesser known models will be noted.

The **psychoanalytic model** is a stage-by-stage process of the growth of human sexuality as it affects personality development. Freud believed that the need for erotic gratification is present from birth onward and that its driving force or energy, libido, is a basic motivation for growth. This process of psychosexual or libidinal development typically proceeds

through five stages, each associated with a specific erogenous zone where libido is focused: oral, anal, genital, latency and genital. This process may unfold in a normal or uneventful fashion in many individuals, while it can be stunted or “fixated” in others. For Freud, “normal” psychosexual development meant internalizing cultural norms, identifying with the same-sex parent and achieving sexual gratification with members of the opposite sex. When fixated, an adult continues to seek gratification in ways that are appropriate only to children or adolescents. Not surprisingly, this perspective has been widely criticized as androcentric (male-centered or dominated) and homophobic (an irrational fear of or ideological bias against homosexuals or homosexuality).

Two other lesser-known theories of psychosexual or gender identity development are Social Learning Theory and Cognitive-Developmental Theory. These models have prompted formation personnel to agree that psychosexual development is a much broader process than Freud assumed, and that it is influenced by several other factors, including cultural, spiritual and religious factors. Finally, it has been said that the goal of psychosexual development is not orgasm but rather the mature capacity to love, and that a high level of psychosexual development is called psychosexual maturity.

Psychosexual Maturity refers to the highest level of psychosexual development wherein an individual has successfully completed the psychosexual developmental tasks associated with attaining adulthood.

Sexual Orientation refers to the emotional and erotic preference for the category of people — heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual — an individual prefers to relate to sexually or intimately. The operative word here is preference amid clear alternatives. For instance, lacking a clear alternative, otherwise heterosexual male prison inmates may engage in homosexual activity.

Sexual Identity refers to the individual's self-identification as heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual. Sexual identity is related to but different from gender identity.

Gender Identity refers to the individual's subjective sense of being a man or a woman. This sense is typically acquired by the age of three. While sex is a biological designation, gender is a socially constructed designation. Closely related to gender identity is gender role, which is the set of socially and culturally specific norms of attitudes and behaviors expected of

men and women. Furthermore, gender role identity is the extent to which the individual actually internalizes those expected attitudes and behaviors. In other words, gender identity is the individual's inner sense of self as a man or woman, while gender role is the outward expression of what the individual feels, thinks, says and does that demonstrates to others that they are a man or a woman. Moreover, gender role and identity are reflected in masculinity and femininity.

Gender-Role Stereotyping refers to oversimplified, rigid, preconceived beliefs about the gender roles of men and women. These beliefs can have a behavioral, psychological, emotional, or religious basis. Gender stereotyping can take two forms. In the first, an individual exhibits a number of characteristics associated with one gender and claims not to have or value the characteristics of the other gender. For instance, a man may boast a macho image and verbally or non-verbally disparage other males who exhibit more feminine or refined tastes. In the second instance, an individual is considered gender stereotyped if others make negative attributions about that individual because he or she exhibits some or many characteristics associated with the opposite gender.

SEXUAL AND GENDER ORIENTATIONS

Androgyny is the ability of an individual to display a variety of masculine and feminine traits or behaviors depending on which is appropriate in a given situation. Androgyny implies that an individual can be both compassionate and assertive, emotional and logical, or determined and free-spirited, depending on the circumstances.

Heterosexuality is sexual desire or behavior directed toward an individual or individuals of the opposite sex. In Western cultures, heterosexuals are sometimes referred to as "straight."

Homosexuality is sexual desire or behavior directed toward an individual or individuals of one's same sex. In Western cultures, male homosexuals are sometimes referred to as "gay" although in some places the term is used to refer to homosexuals of either sex.

Homophobia is an irrational fear of or ideological bias against homosexuality or homosexual individuals.

Rating Scale for Sexual Orientation: In the 1940s, a group of sex researchers headed by Alfred

Kinsey developed a 7-point rating scale called the "Rating Scale for Sexual Orientation" to describe and measure sexual orientation. On this scale, 0 represented an individual with an exclusively heterosexual orientation, while 6 represented individuals with an exclusively homosexual orientation. Individuals with ratings of 1 or 5 were considered to have predominantly heterosexual (1) or homosexual (5) orientations, while individuals with ratings of 2, 3 or 4 were regarded as having bisexual orientations.

Recent scientifically conducted surveys indicate that about 3-5 percent of adult American males and about 1 percent of adult American females are homosexual. These data don't match the commonly held belief among many that about 10 percent of the adult population in America is gay or lesbian.

Situational Homosexuality refers to heterosexuals who engage in homosexual behavior when their access to heterosexual behavior is limited or denied, such as in prisons, boarding schools, etc.

Lesbianism refers to the sexual orientation in which a female has a preference for, attraction to and/or engages in sexual behavior with a woman or women. Lesbians are female homosexuals.

Bisexuality refers to the sexual orientation in which an individual has a preference for, attraction to and/or engages in sexual behavior with both women and men. Relatively little is known about bisexuality in terms of numbers and percentage of the population, or how their relationships differ from those of exclusively heterosexual or homosexual individuals. Furthermore, there is little consensus among researchers on what constitutes bisexuality, including whether it is an enduring trait, rather than simply a matter of convenience or expedience.

Transgenderism refers to the continuum along which individuals engage in behaviors that are associated with the other gender. Transgender refers to the practices of an individual whose gender roles and behaviors, such as cross-dressing, are the opposite of those that the culture expects based on his or her anatomy.

Transexualism refers to the intense, prolonged psychological distress with one's biological sex, often leading the individual to seek surgery to "correct" the condition. A transsexual is an adult whose gender identity does not match his or her biological sex.

SEXUAL DIFFICULTIES AND DISORDERS

Fixation: a developmental “arrest” or failure to achieve a developmental task at an earlier stage of psychosexual development that causes the adult to act in a less than age-appropriate fashion in given situations or to seek gratification in ways that are appropriate only for children or adolescents.

Boundaries are norms, rules or codes of conduct that characterize an individual's personal space or environment and his or her sense of security and safety. Healthy boundaries provide a nurturing and safe physical, emotional, sexual and spiritual environment for individuals. Unhealthy boundaries do not provide these types of environment because they are too rigid, loose or inconsistent, and are intentionally or inadvertently violated by others. The statements “you're standing too close” or “she's invading my personal space” reflect boundary violations.

Sexual Offender: A sexual offender is defined as an adult (a) who has sexual contact with a minor for the purpose of becoming sexually aroused, or (b) who has sexual contact with age-appropriate adults wherein the sexual advance is unwanted or out of control.

Sexual Abuse is the invasion of an individual's sexual boundaries by someone who possesses emotional, physical or spiritual influence or power over the individual. Sexual abuse inevitably damages psychologically vulnerable individuals.

Vulnerability is a condition in which there is a reduced capacity to face and resist invasion of one's boundaries.

Sexual Misconduct is a term often associated with a breach of a professional relationship and involves any sexual action considered immoral or illegal by a professional that violates an individual's boundaries.

Sexual Harassment is the use of emotional, financial, social or organizational power or influence to gain sexual access to or dominance over a person who is vulnerable to such influences. It can involve, whether intended or not, the creation of a hostile environment in which words, actions, artwork or humor cause such discomfort for individuals that they cannot function effectively within that environment.

Abusiveness and the Abusive Personality:

Abusiveness refers to the characteristic pattern of abusive behavior — physical, verbal, emotional and/or sexual abuse — that characterizes the abusive personality. These individuals are not abusive at all times and in all situations, but rather only in specific situations and circumstances that activate the pattern of abusiveness. Common to all forms of abuse is emotional abuse. Research indicates that emotional abuse can serve as a proxy for physical and sexual abuse. For instance, an emotionally abusive gesture or comment may remind a sexually abused individual that he or she can be sexually abused or beaten at any time. Underlying the abusive pattern is the theme of dominance or power of subjugation. The abusive personality is preoccupied with control, controlling how others think, feel and act. Many fixated pedophiles and ephebophiles display characteristics of an abusive personality.

Sexual Compulsivity refers to the loss of ability to choose freely whether to stop or continue a sexual behavior, where there is continuation of the behavior despite adverse consequences and despite efforts to cease or reduce the frequency of these behaviors. Compulsive behaviors are furthered exacerbated and reinforced by accompanying obsessions, i.e., obsessive thoughts.

Paraphilias: A paraphilia is a class of psychosexual disorders in which a deviant form or intensity of sexual behavior is needed to experience sexual excitement, arousal and gratification. The psychiatric diagnostic manual describes eight types of paraphilias. These include exhibitionism, e.g., exposing one's genitals to unsuspecting strangers; fetishism, e.g., holding an inanimate object such as women's panties while masturbating; frotteurism, e.g., touching or rubbing against a nonconsensual person; sexual masochism, e.g., making another suffer by humiliation, beating or bondage; sexual sadism, e.g., inflicting suffering on a victim; transvestic fetishism, e.g., intense arousal involving cross-dressing; voyeurism, e.g., observing an unsuspecting person disrobe or engage in sex; and pedophilia, described in the next section.

Pedophilia refers to sexual activity by adults with a pre-pubescent child, age thirteen or younger. Pedophilia may involve undressing the child, exposing oneself to the child, masturbating in the presence of the child, touching and fondling, or performing fellatio or cunnilingus or penetrating the child with a penis, finger or other objects. Currently, pedophilia is

considered a grave moral failing, a legal offense and a psychiatric disorder also called a psychosexual disorder. Legally, most state laws designate sexual behavior between an adult and a child under the age of twelve or thirteen to constitute pedophilia, which is a felony. The latest diagnostic manual specifies three criteria that must be met in order for the diagnosis of pedophilia to be given. First, the adult must experience over a period of at least six months, recurrent, intense, sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges or behaviors involving sexual activity with a child. Second, the individual must have acted on these sexual urges, or the sexual urges or fantasies must have caused the individual marked distress or interpersonal difficulty. Third, the individual must be at least sixteen years old and be at least five years older than the child or children. Pedophilia is actively promoted by the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA).

Pedophile: A pedophile is an adult who is sexually attracted to pre-pubescent children. Different types of pedophiles can be described: "exclusive types," i.e., those attracted only to children, and "non-exclusive" types who, while primarily attracted to children, are sometimes attracted to adults. A more commonly reported distinction is between fixated and regressed pedophilia.

Fixated Pedophile: A fixated pedophile is described as an individual whose primary sexual interest is in children and who rarely, if ever, engages in sex with peers. These individuals typically are involved with child pornography, may masturbate compulsively and often use alcohol or other drugs for their disinhibiting effect. They tend to be calculating rather than impulsive in their sexual exploits and use cunning, deceit and intimidation. There is growing consensus that these individuals are psychosexually immature and developmentally fixated.

Regressed Pedophile: On the other hand, a regressed pedophile is described as an individual whose primary sexual orientation is toward adults of the opposite sex. Under extreme stress such individuals can psychologically regress to an earlier psychosexual stage and engage in sex with a child.

Ephebophilia refers to the sexual attraction and arousal of adults to post-pubescent or adolescent minors, arbitrarily designated between the ages fourteen to seventeen. The cut-off age is set at seventeen because it is presumed that legally, individuals who are eighteen and older can provide full consent to

engage in sexual activity with an adult. Interestingly, church law sets sixteen as the age at which an individual is capable of providing full consent for engaging in consensual sex. Currently, ephebophilia is considered both a grave moral failing and a legal offense — a felony, but not a psychiatric disorder, i.e., paraphilia.

Ephebophile: An ephebophile is an adult who is sexually attracted and aroused by post-pubescent or adolescent minors.

Fixated Ephebophile: A fixated ephebophile is described as an individual whose primary sexual interest is in adolescents and who rarely, if ever, engages in sex with other adults. These individuals are commonly involved with pornography and typically use alcohol or other drugs for their disinhibiting effect prior to engaging in sexual activity. They tend to be calculating rather than impulsive in their sexual exploits and use cunning, deceit and intimidation. There is growing consensus that these individuals are psychosexually immature and developmentally fixated.

Regressed Ephebophile: On the other hand, a regressed ephebophile is described as an individual whose primary sexual orientation is toward adults of the opposite sex. Under extreme stress such individuals can psychologically regress to an earlier psychosexual stage and engage in sex with an adolescent.

NAMBLA: The North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) is a group of gays who advocate sexual relations between adults and minors, which they refer to as consensual sex with minors or "intergenerational relationships." Mainline gay and lesbian groups, such as the Human Rights Campaign Fund and the International Lesbian and Gay Association, have distanced themselves from NAMBLA because of its support of pedophilic activities. These groups also insist that NAMBLA is not a "gay organization" and exclude it from Gay Pride Celebrations and other joint activities and publications.

INTIMACY AND SEXUALITY

Intimacy refers to those feelings in a relationship that promote closeness or bondedness and the experience of warmth. This sense of closeness can include emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual bonds. However, not all close relationships are intimate. For example, while you may work closely with a colleague, the relationship would not be considered inti-

mate unless the second component, i.e., the experience of warmth, is present. Intimacy is a close, familiar and often affectionate personal relationship with another person that involves an in-depth knowledge of the person as well as a proactive expression of one's thoughts, feelings and sentiments that serves as a token of familiarity. Such closeness in friendships or in romantic relationships usually entails ambivalent feelings, both positive and negative. "Maturity in intimacy means learning to live with both the exhilaration and the strain that comes with being close," according to the Whiteheads. Sex may or may not play a role in intimate relationships, just as intimacy may or may not accompany sexual activity.

Sexual Intimacy refers to the sexuality in an intimate relationship in all its variations, ranging from gentle touch to genital intercourse. It is eroticized intimacy, and thus can be distinguished from non-eroticized or non-sexual intimacy.

Non-Genital Intimacy refers to several forms of intimacy without genital expression. These include emotional intimacy, i.e., the sense of closeness, trust and warmth experienced with a friend or friends, and intellectual intimacy, which involves a deep sharing of heartfelt ideas and ideals while grappling with both important personal and life-sustaining questions. It also includes spiritual intimacy, i.e., a sense of closeness with God.

Barriers to Intimacy refer to specific behaviors, skill deficits or dispositions that effectively block or protect an individual from forming or maintaining a close bond with another. These include fear of engulfment, lack of trust, limited capacity for empathy, insensitive communication, self-deception, perfectionism, isolation and failure to achieve a sense of personal identity. In and of itself, the presence of a character or personality disorder, such as the narcissistic or antisocial personality disorder, is a major barrier to intimacy.

Celibate Sexuality: Celibacy refers to a way of life characterized by the renunciation of marriage for the sake of the reign of God. Related to celibacy is chastity. Chastity is the virtue that seeks the integration of the true meaning of human sexuality and intimacy whether one is married or celibate. In the priesthood

and religious life, celibate sexuality has been described by Donald Goergen and others as an expression of sexuality that is centered on friendship and which strives after non-genital intimacy.

Masturbation refers to self-stimulation of the genitals to achieve erotic gratification. Traditionally, masturbation was always considered self-abuse and thus harmful and sinful. Today, from a developmental perspective, a more differentiated understanding emerges. In this perspective, infantile and adolescent masturbation is viewed more as exploratory behavior while occasional masturbation in adulthood may serve as an outlet for tension. Nevertheless, abusive or compulsive forms tend to be viewed as harmful or sinful.

Sexuality and Spirituality: Sexuality can be viewed in relationship to spirituality. Christian spirituality can be defined as a patterning of life around the experience of God in the faith community centered in Christ and the embracing of the life of the flesh. Such a patterning of life includes psychological development, which inevitably includes sexual development. Hence, spirituality and sexuality are integrally related. Finally, spirituality can also be related to intimacy, such that spiritual intimacy is described as a sense of closeness and bonding with God.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Francouer, R. (ed.). *The International Encyclopedia of Sexuality*. Volumes 1-3. New York: Continuum, 1997.
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BOOK REVIEWS

Building a Family: A Handbook for Parenting with God, by Marilyn Spaw Krock. Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2003. 160 pp. \$14.95.

Is it possible to keep God at the center of a family when a toddler, preschooler or older child is demanding time and attention? According to Marilyn Spaw Krock's new book, *Building a Family: A Handbook for Parenting with God*, it is possible. Krock's book nicely outlines a wide variety of topics pertinent to a parent-child relationship, while consciously keeping God in it as well.

The book focuses on the time necessary to develop relationships, to appreciate family history, to communicate and to develop parenting skills. Each chapter provides practical insight on all aspects of parenting and child growth and development, along with useful suggestions on how to enjoy parenting within the daily joys and struggles of life with a child.

Following each chapter are questions for reflection and/or discussion. These questions allow individuals to reflect more on their own parenting skills and family life.

Krock discusses a difficult issue in any marriage — finances. These become more difficult to manage as children are added to the family mix. She notes the importance of each parent understanding their own family background and history when working out family finances. She also provides helpful suggestions on how to deal with differences in financial matters and how to teach children to become financially responsible.

Krock notes that children feel loved in direct proportion to the "quantity" of time parents spend with them versus the "quality" of time. The idea that "quantity" is more important than "quality" may be a particularly difficult concept for parents who work. These parents are often required to spend time away from their children just to maintain the basics of a

household. However, she does point out the importance of flexibility with time — drop the laundry to enjoy a picnic in the park; the laundry will be there when you return.

The book finishes with an array of sources for further education. These sources include Web sites, references for additional reading material and information on parental education.

This book is worthwhile reading for anyone who is attempting to parent children and trying to include God in the process. Due to the many examples she cites from her own experience, the information presented seems better suited for parents with grade-school or older children, not toddlers and infants. It could be used in parish life. Also, the book would be a great resource for small groups, providing an opportunity to bring parents together to support one another in living a Christian life and learning how to pass Christian values and beliefs on to their children.

— Angela Romano Papillo

Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-Year-Old Company that Changed the World, by Chris Lowney. Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2003. 330 pp. \$24.95

The Jesuits have made such a substantive contribution to church and society in the arts and sciences one must wonder how we ever got to the sixteenth century without them. Chris Lowney takes up the task of analyzing the dynamics underlying all that success.

Lowney lived as a Jesuit for seven years prior to entering the business milieu of J.P. Morgan in 1983. Struck by what he sees connecting the two experiences, Lowney offers insights into leadership, a quality that separates winners from losers in corporate life. He draws these insights from the Jesuit "way of doing things," leadership in the Ignatian style. Lowney describes this leadership model as based on

"four pillars" that distinguish it from other methods and models of leadership development popular today.

According to Lowney, the four pillars of Jesuit formation ground what he calls the counter cultural Jesuit vision of effective leadership: self-awareness, ingenuity, love and heroism. This formation emphasizes not what a leader does but who a leader is. The goal is not simply effective activity but the effectiveness of the person. On these four pillars, writes Lowney, the Jesuits built "the most successful religious company in history." The source of their success, he asserts, was the way Jesuits lived and worked, not their adherence to any particular religious belief. Consequently, he believes that any person or organization interested in effective, whole-person leadership can learn and apply the wisdom of these four principles. In the last of twelve chapters, Lowney provides six guidelines to help you become "a leader who makes the kind of impact on the world that Ignatius Loyola did." Quite a promise.

Lowney's obvious love and appreciation for the Jesuits energizes his concise yet concrete depictions of the heroic leadership of Ignatius Loyola and the early members of "the company." He acknowledges that from those early days until now, "it was a religious calling that inspired Jesuits — both saintly and stumbling — to embrace those leadership principles." He is clear that a leader's values and ways of working must form an integrated, self-reinforcing whole, a way of life. Still, he insists it was not their religious beliefs that produced such outstanding Jesuit leaders. He eagerly draws parallels between the Jesuit *modo de proceder* ("way of doing things") and the insights of some key contemporary leadership consultants. In his enthusiasm, he slides a bit into glib understatement of the differences. Lowney easily strips the underlying religious assumptions from core elements of Ignatian spirituality — the Spiritual Exercises, the Contemplation to Attain Love, the *magis* and the *examen* made three times a day. In doing so, he appears to turn these teachings into his own version of the latest "5 tools for leadership success."

Heroic Leadership is an engaging and enjoyable interpretation of what makes Jesuits tick as leaders. Leaders interested in their own ongoing development will find his material both encouraging and challenging. Lowney's approach, however, may both inspire and irritate leaders who have an understanding of religious life. It is not just religious beliefs, after all, but profound faith that is the dynamic nucleus of the Ignatian way of doing things. No simple corporate vision of the future could be transcendent enough to call forth the *Suscipe*.

— Gertrude Foley, S.C.

Transforming Leadership, A New Pursuit of Happiness, by James MacGregor Burns. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press. 2003. 320 pp. USA \$25.00, Can \$40.95.

I should warn you, this review is not a dispassionate discourse on one man's leadership theory — sorry, it can't be. In my thirty-five years as a leadership student, practitioner and teacher, no theory has had greater impact on how I have tried to lead my own organizations, and the author's new book only reenergizes my belief in Burns' transforming leadership.

Pulitzer Prize-winner James MacGregor Burns is Senior Fellow at the Jepson School of Leadership Studies. A former dean said, "Burns is to leadership studies as Peter Drucker is to management and Freud is to psychology." Should you doubt this claim, I offer as corroboration the fact that the University of Maryland named its leadership school after Burns, and transforming leadership is its foundation theory. Furthermore, a Google search will yield 5,990 references on James MacGregor Burns and 2,700 references on transforming leadership — clearly Burns and his theory have pervasive influence on current leadership thinking.

Burns introduced transforming leadership in his 1978 book, *Leadership*, and gives it a fresh perspective in *Transforming Leadership, A New Pursuit of Happiness*. When I finished reading it, I had way too many "Post-It Notes" marking concepts to share with you, so I will simply have to whet your appetite.

Burns begins by exploring the "mysteries" of leadership and change in history, crediting the Enlightenment with awakening the reality that people could control their future through intended change. He defines leadership as a "multidiscipline" and the "X factor" in historic causation. Throughout the book, Burns gives us insight into the complexity of transforming leadership and its underlying principles — virtue, ethics, transforming values, Maslow's needs hierarchy, empowerment, leader-follower relationships, positive conflict, etc.

Based on these insights, Burns examines leaders in history to determine if they were transactional or transformational leaders or just rulers. Why were Queen Elizabeth I and Mikhail Gorbachev transactional leaders, while our Founding Fathers and Franklin Roosevelt transforming leaders? Why was Hitler no leader at all?

I was especially fascinated by Burns' treatment of

the American Revolution and the transformation of leadership during our grand democratic experiment. He defines "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" as a "remarkable distillation of the supreme values of the Western world." Burns tells us that the pursuit of happiness was never seen as trivial pleasure seeking, but a "profound and complex" thought in Western culture about the conditions of life and people's efforts to improve them. This concept that so influenced our Founding Fathers originated with the Greek philosophers and found its most refined articulation with the Enlightenment philosophes.

In making his case for transforming leadership, Burns compares the American Revolution with the French Revolution, born of the same Enlightenment (after all, many of the philosophes were French) and possessed of a Constitution very similar to its American counterpart. Why did the American Revolution succeed and the French Revolution descend into the horrors of the Terror? (Hint: The answer involves dire needs unmet and fanatics commandeering the leadership in France.)

Burns then explores in depth the relationship

between transforming leaders and followers in terms of motivation, creativity, the "leader-follower paradox," conflict and values.

At this point, I can hear you saying: "So what does a leadership theory about the dynamics of momentous events have to do with me at the community level working in pastoral care, parish development, education, religious formation? In his epilogue, Burns attempts to bring his theory "down to earth" by making the case for transforming leadership as a means of addressing global poverty. If I have a criticism of the book, it would be that it could use another case — one at the community level that applies transforming leadership to town or community service organizations.

But, that is a minor criticism. As I said, I have tried to be a transforming leader, and I know this — Burns' theory works. Empowerment works. Embracing conflict works. Listening to people's needs and responding works. And reading *Transforming Leadership, A New Pursuit of Happiness* can work for you.

— Rob Kuehn

CISHS Moves to Nairobi

We are happy to announce the continuation of The Christian Institute for the Study of Human Sexuality in Nairobi, Kenya. Father Angelo D'Agostino, S.J., M.D., an American Jesuit psychiatrist who lives and works in Nairobi, is the new Director of the Academic, Adult-Education-Model Program as designed by Father James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.

The first four-week program is scheduled to begin in June 2004. Information and application forms can be obtained online at CISHS@aol.com or by writing to:

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